

N<sup>o</sup>. 18.

N<sup>o</sup>. 19

A  
LETTER

TO

Mr. Thomas Bennet,

IN

DEFENCE

OF THE

*Review of the Case of Liturgies,  
and their Imposition.*

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By BENJAMIN ROBINSON,  
Minister of the Gospel.

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Sam. Leeme his book.  
June 1710

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A

# LETTER

TO

Mr. T. Bennet, &c.

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S I R,

**Y**OUR angry *Letter* I have carefully consider'd; and (by the Advice of Others) am now determin'd to return, what in my Opinion it does not deserve, an *Answer* to it.

The main Design of it is, as the Reader will easily see, not to support the Cause of *Liturgies and their Imposition*, against what I had said upon that Subject: but to vilifie and expose *my Person*, and prepossess the World with Prejudices against me. To this Purpose you have pick'd out here and there a few incidental Passages, and hasty Expressions (such as too often drop from the Pens of Controversial Writers, in the Heat of Dispute) wherein the Argument is no Way concern'd: And to blacken my suppos'd Crimes the more, you have oft fetch'd Matter wherewith to charge me from the *Alphabetical Table* at the End of my Book; tho' you might have known (what I told you before the Book was fully printed) that *that* was undertaken by another Hand. When you therefore complain of me as charging *Self-Contradictions* upon you (a); and spite-

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(a) Letter, p. 32. And again, p. 48.

*ful Reflections* (a); and (which you afterwards let me know you do most of all resent) *Prevarications* (b); how comes it, Sir, that you refer your Reader thither? Was it that you had forgot the *Index* was not drawn up by me; or that you was resolv'd, right or wrong, this Way to swell the Account, and possess the World with an Opinion, that I had treated you with nothing but hard Words?

But after all, do you really expect the main Cause in Debate between Us shou'd hereupon be given on your Side? admit that I have us'd sometimes severer Language than was strictly justifiable; yet the Reader will, I hope, find somewhat in that Treatise besides hard Words; and somewhat that really presses Mr. Bennet harder, than the very severest Expressions of which He so loudly complains.

Admit, that it is somewhat rude and unmannerly, to charge a Person of your Figure and Consideration in the Church with *Blunders*, and *Self-Contradictions*; much more with *Forgery* and *Prevarication*: yet it will, I hope, extenuate my Defect in the Point of good Manners, if I shou'd (in most or all of the Particulars) make the Charge appear to be strictly true. Nay, admit, that I shou'd in one or other Particular prove to have charg'd you thro' Mistake (since I can and do appeal to the great God, the Searcher of all Hearts, that I have never done it knowingly or with Design:) I hope it will not be unpardonable.

What means then all the mighty Noise you have made, upon a few *unwary Expressions* (at the worst:) what mean you, I say, to write a whole Book about such Trifles? and yet what is there besides in all your *Letter*? Is it not one continu'd Attempt, to wipe off those *Reflections* from your self, and to retort 'em upon me? And can you really think this was worth your while? The Reader, to be sure, will be wonderfully concern'd to know whether Mr. Bennet, or Mr. Robinson is the wiser or the better Man; or

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(a) Letter, p. 186. See also p. 187. about extolling, &c. (b) Ibid. p. 66, as also p. 67, 68. And again p. 78.

which of us is the more careless, and more apt to blunder: whether you or I be better skill'd in Ecclesiastical Antiquity; and which of us are better manner'd, and the better Scholars, &c. For my Part, I wou'd never once have set Pen to Paper, nor have so much as wrote a single Line or Syllable upon this Occasion; had it not been that I wou'd fain put you out of Conceit with *Scribbling*, by shewing you once more the Emptiness and Vanity of your Performance: but if this does not work a Cure; and either put an End to your writing Controversies, or at least make you for the future write to better Purpose; I will for ever take my Leave of you: as concluding it must be only Time, and *universal Contempt and Neglect* that must be your Remedy. And that the World will soon grow weary of your Performances, and leave 'em (as they will deserve) to be employ'd in the meanest Uses of Waste-Paper, is what you may depend upon, if you go on to write at this Rate. Nor shall I my self expect to meet with any better Treatment, if I should follow you long in such a frivolous Squabble: yet this once I am content to play the Fool, if it may help you to see and be out of Love with your own Distemper: But take my Word for it, if you still go on in this Way, you shall hereafter talk to your self for me: nay, tho' you shou'd rave like one distracted, and (while you are able to hold a Pen) perpetually go on to provoke me, with the utmost Improvements of *Bedlam* or *Billingsgate*; I never will engage any further with you.

SECT. I. You seem, Sir, in your *first Chapter* apprehensive that your *addressing me* in so publick a Way, was what the World would expect a Reason of. And I still am satisfy'd, you might have been as likely to reach every good End you cou'd propose to your self in writing such a Letter; and wou'd much better have consulted your own *Reputation*, if you had chosen rather to do it *privately*, either in a *Personal Conversation*, or under your *Hand and Seal*.



*Seal*. But it seems you found your self oblig'd to do it publickly for the *Reader's*, and for my *Sake*, as well as for your own. For my *Sake*, to forward my *Repentance* (a). But whatever Occasion there might be for this, I see not why you shou'd therefore be oblig'd to make me so publick an *Address*: Is a *Letter* strong and convincing only when 'tis in *Print*? or if you did suspect a written *Letter* (how powerful soever) wou'd have lost any of its *Virtue*, in its Conveyance by the common Way of *Post*; you might have sent it by some particular confiding *Friend*: or, rather than fail, have deliver'd it with your own *Hand*. Was there no Way to forward my *Repentance*, unless I be reprov'd in the *Hearing* of all the *World*? What has the *World* to do, I beseech you, with the little pettish *Words*, that now and then happen between you and me? But this rather appears to have been your *Design*, not to forward my *Repentance*, so much as to publish my *Reproach*. This, I thank God, I can easily forgive.

But you plead, that you was oblig'd to do it for the *Reader's Sake*, to prevent his being impos'd upon, and injur'd by me (b). Which Way cou'd you imagine, Sir, they were in any such *Danger*? Why, say you, "generally speaking, they (the *Readers*) depend entirely upon the *Author's Veracity* and *Integrity*, &c. (c) And do you truly look upon the *Generality* of *Readers* to be such, and particularly of those that converse with *Controversial Writings*, who either are, or ought to be the more learned and sensible Part of *Mankind*. They owe you *Thanks*, to be sure, for the *Complement* you here pass upon 'em. And is not Mr. *Bennet* wonderfully good humour'd, who is almost perpetually studying to oblige such *Readers*? I must confess, I did not expect to meet with Persons that were so easie and obsequious: and therefore thought my self oblig'd diligently to keep to the Point before me; and carefully to weigh (at least) what I offer'd as *Argument* for their *Conviction*: and where you chiefly

(a) Letter, p. 4. (b) *Ibid.* p. 2. (c) *Ibid.*

barrel with me, 'tis not for the Weakness of my  
 Arguments; but for a few *smart* and sometimes  
*pleasant* Reflections here and there intermix'd; chiefly  
 with Design to keep my Readers awake, but not  
 at all to bias their Judgment one Way or other.  
 Yet upon this you presently come out with a  
 book of *Two Hundred Pages*, wherein you never  
 once meddle with any material Point in Debate be-  
 tween Us: and this you do, *to prevent* the Rea-  
 der's being impos'd upon, and injur'd by those (suffer  
 me to call 'em) *innocent Excursions*. I beseech you,  
 Sir, what Sort of Readers must they be, that will  
 immediately conclude, you *blunder, prevaricate, con-*  
*tradict your self, &c.* upon my bare Word, and not  
 attend at all to the Allegations by which I support  
 my Charge. I assure you, Sir, if there be any such  
 weak Persons in the World, I do not desire they  
 shou'd be my Readers: nor did I, neither do I ever  
 intend to write for the Use of such. But suffer me  
 to say a plain Truth, that I cannot but think, you  
 shou'd hardly write as you do, if you did not too  
 much depend upon meeting with such Readers as these.  
 Before I quit this Paragraph, I must also take Leave  
 to express my Wonder, that you shou'd call the  
*Disputes* between you and me, *Matters of Practical*  
*Religion* (a), and insinuate immediately thereupon,  
 that Errors relating to those Points, are dangerous  
 to the last Degree: *How dangerous such Errors may*  
*prove, with Respect to [Men's] future State*, you tell  
 Us that *you tremble to think* (b). Could any one  
 have imagin'd, that the Matters you are here speak-  
 ing of are very Trifles; what *Religion* (properly so  
 call'd) has no Concern at all in; and such as the  
 very best of Men, those of the most distinguish'd  
 Characters for Piety and Goodness that ever liv'd  
 among Us, have had differing Sentiments about? What  
 cou'd you possibly have said more warm and moving,  
 if the very Foundations of Our common Christianity  
 had lain at Stake? And can you be content, that  
 the World should put the grand *Essentials of Our holy*

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(a) Letter, p. 2. (b) *Ibid.*

Religion, upon the same Foot, with the Point of Praying in Publick with, or without, stated Forms! I beseech you, Sir, think what you are doing; You know we live in a very sceptical Age: and has it not the directest Tendency to make Men Atheists when they observe a Christian, a Clergy-man press and plead for or against the Use of stated Forms in Publick Worship, with the very same Vehemence and Solemnity, as they use to do on the most awful and important Occasions in the World? Pray, learn for the future, to lay out your warmest Zeal and Charity for the Souls of Men, upon Subjects that are really great enough to invite and answer such Expressions as these: and do not any more lay before Mankind so strong a Temptation, either to suspect all Religion to be a meer Sham; or that Mr. Bennet himself is a secret Infidel.

At last we come at, what, I verily believe, was the true Reason of your Letter: for you tell us, you found your self oblig'd to it for your own Sake, to wipe off the Aspersions I had cast upon you, &c. (a) For your own Sake. Yes, by all Means: Who so near you as your own dear self. But must all the World therefore be disturb'd with your Self-Defence! No, no Mr. Bennet, do not mistake your self, you are not of such Consideration neither: nor will Mankind concern themselves in your Personal Quarrels. And that, if you be not already, you will e'er long be convinc'd of: when your Apologies and Admonitions lie neglected upon the Stalls; and the Bookseller who has caress'd you, begins to follow you with perpetual Complaints. What those Aspersions are, which I had cast upon you, I shall more particularly consider by and by, with the Reasons of 'em: but in the gross they amount to no more, than that Mr. Bennet has sometimes blunder'd, sometimes contradicted himself, and (that which you your self reckon the blackest, and most severe among 'em all is) (that you have sometimes prevaricated. Upon this you cry out of heinous Imputations (b), scandalous As-

(a) Letter, p. 2, 3, 4. (b) Ibid. p. 4.



persons (a), filthy Language (b), abominable Suggestions (c), villainous and scandalous Imputations, &c (d). You complain that I have blackned you to the utmost of my Power, and represented you as an arrant Knave and Villain (e): that I make a Devil of you (f); that if what I have said of you be true, 'tis certain you are not fit to live, and that you are fully ripe for Eternal Damnation (g).

But have I ever said any Thing like this of you! this Language is what I no where allow my self to use: Nor is it what I ever meant. Surely every one is not immediately a Knave, and a Villain, a damn'd Wretch, and a Devil, that ever did in the Course of a Controversie conceal a Difficulty with which he found himself press'd: or misrepresent the Sense of an Author thro' Mistake: or, even sometimes knowingly and with Design (when under a powerful Temptation) to support his own Reputation, and to give Countenance to a Cause that lies near his Heart. And yet this is the very utmost that I have any where charg'd you with. This is all I mean, when I say you have prevaricated, &c. I never imagin'd you to be a Man of a profligate Conscience, a Writer that deserv'd to be pillory'd (h): This too is your own Rant, and these fiery Dragons and terrible Monsters (i) are the Creatures of your own distemper'd Imagination, Sir. And what now will the Reader say, if any one will give himself the Trouble of reading, upon so mean and frivolous a Subject as this: he surely will conclude, Mr. Bennet is either a very unskilful Casuist, if He cannot distinguish between a particular Act, that is not over honest; and such a prevailing Habit of Wickedness, as does denominate a Man, and will affect his Eternal State: or, at least, that He is terribly gall'd by somewhat else in that Book of mine, which He does conceal; else He wou'd never have roar'd out as He does, and made such a dreadful Noise, for a few angry Words.

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(a) Letter, p. 152. (b) *Ibid.* p. 168. (c) *Ibid.* p. 189.  
 (d) *Ibid.* p. 193. (e) *Ibid.* p. 3. (f) *Ibid.* p. 56.  
 (g) *Ibid.* p. 195. (h) *Ibid.* p. 151. (i) *Ibid.* p. 186.

SECT. II. I shall now proceed to the Particulars which furnish out your Complaint. And *First*, you are very uneasie at my Reflections upon your *Definition of Prayer*. Because you tell the World, that *the very Essence of Prayer* consists in *speaking to God* (a): I ventur'd to call this your *Definition of Prayer*; and thereupon expos'd the Inaccuracy and Defects of it. And am I therefore to be blam'd? Tell me, Sir, is this a *Definition of Prayer*, or is it not? If it be, and you intended it for such; it deserv'd surely to be expos'd. A *Definition* shou'd contain neither *less*, nor *more* than does essentially belong to *the Thing defin'd*. So it was I remember, when I us'd to read *Logick* to my Pupils: whom, I do assure you, (how angry soever you may be to hear it) I never suffer'd to *talk*, at that loose Rate that you take the Freedom to *write*, for the Benefit of the learned World. To what Purpose do you tell me, that *many excellent and most devout Writers have defin'd Prayer after the same less perfect Manner* (b)? I hope those that write *Popular Treatises of Devotion* may be allow'd to express themselves more loosely; than one who sets up for a Master in *Controversies*: because they seldom, if ever, pretend to *define* the Subject they treat upon; must you therefore be allow'd to put your shamefully defective Notion of Prayer upon the World for a *Definition*? And why do you refer me to other Places of your Books, where you do indeed tell your Reader, that the *Things* that are to be spoken to God in Prayer, must be *such, as do either express, or imply an Acknowledgement of Homage, Dependence, Subjection, Obedience, &c.* Does this at all affect the Force of my Reasoning against your *Definition*? I argue, if *the very Essence of Prayer* does (as you say) consist in *speaking to God*: if *Praying and Speaking to God* are (as you tell us *they are*) one and *the same Thing* (c): then whatever is spoken to God, wou'd be proper Prayer; even tho' it were design'd to mock, to

(a) Discourse of Joint-Prayer, p. 6. (b) Letter, p. 8. (c) Disc. p. 6.

blaspheme, or to curse him to his Face. I did not in the least imagine, that you wou'd own, *such Words* (tho' spoken to God) to be truly *Prayer*: nor will any Reader, from this Passage of mine, conclude this to be *your Opinion*: but only, that I was endeavouring to convince you of the Absurdity of *your Definition*, by drawing it out into its necessary and immediate Consequences. And is this either *unreasonable*, or *invidious*? And must *the Integrity* of what I write, be reflected upon for this? and the Reader warn'd carefully for the future to examine what I say (a).

Instead of resenting this, (tho' fully equal to the very hardest Word I ever said of you) I pass it with Contempt: and in meer Pity to you, still advise you to forbear *Scribbling*: the further you go, you will but the more expose the Defects either of your *Intellectuals*, or your *Education*. Really, Sir, (whatever you may think) Men of Sense will not think it tolerable, for you to talk at the Rate you do: to complain of the *Consequences* charg'd upon your *Definition* of Prayer, as if they had been *Principles* which I wou'd persuade the World you held! to cry out as if the *Absurdity* from whence I argu'd against your *Definition*, had been an *Imputation* directly laid upon your Self! Sir, you amaze me: Is it possible that one who has had an *Academical Institution*, and been admitted to his *Degrees* as a *Master in Arts*, shou'd be so stupidly ignorant, in things of this Nature! And 'tis as wonderful what you tell me, that by *God's particular Providence*, you had prevented the very Ground of this *Objection* (b). And how, I beseech you? Why, you had elsewhere told Us, that *Whensoever a Man speaks such things to God, as do either express or imply an Acknowledgement of Homage, Dependence, Subjection, Obedience, &c. A Man (I say) does then truly and properly pray to God.* For which you quote your *Brief History, and Discourse of Joint Prayer* (c). This, I grant you, does sufficiently shew, that you would not allow *mocking, blaspheming, cursing God* to

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(a) Letter, p. 8. (b) *Ibid.* p. 8, 9, 10.



his Face, to be praying to Him : But it does by no means prove, that that is not the direct Consequence of your loose and inaccurate *Definition*. But what is most of all surprizing is, that you should once and again call the above-mention'd Words a *Definition* : " I give (say you) the *Definition of Prayer at length in the Brief History* " thus, As how, Sir? And then it follows in these Words, " Whensoever a Man speaks such " things, &c. You further add, *But in the* Dis- " course of Joint-Prayer, *I not only give the* De- " finition, *but also the Reason and Ground of it,* &c. (a) And must this be allow'd to pass for a *Definition* ! What, I beseech you, is the *Genus* ? And what the *Differentia Specificans* ? Of which two parts you shou'd have known, every *Definition* ought to consist. A *Description*, Sir, you might have been allow'd to call it, and (with all that is here added to it) a miserably lame and defective One it is; as I shall (God willing) make appear, if ever you give me a just Occasion to write again upon the main Subject : But a *Definition* it can never be. Mr. Bennet, I perceive, does understand as little what belongs to *Definitions*, as He does of *Demonstrations*. And is this the Gentleman, that pretends to direct the whole Body of the *Dissenters*, in the Method of their Studies ? And saucily reflects upon 'em in the gross, as if He cou'd put 'em into the way of being *better Scholars* (b) ? I tell you, Sir, you wou'd be kind to your self, as well as to the World, if you wou'd return back to your College once more, and give your Tutor the Opportunity to try whether it be yet possible to make you understand your *Logick* at least ; if not a little of the *Mathematicks* too : For till you have some acquaintance with those severer Studies, what Learning you have of other kinds will only help to expose you the more remarkably.

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(a) Letter, p. 8. (b) *Ibid.* p. 129, 130.

SECT. III. Your *Six* following *Chapters* are wholly taken up, in the clearing your self from the *Self-Contradictions* I had (as you suppose at least) charg'd upon you. Now whether I charg'd you with so many *Self-Contradictions*, or not: whether if I did, the Charge was with, or without sufficient Ground; I presume the Reader will not imagine, the main Cause between Us to be concern'd in it. Why then must the World be call'd in to hear your *Self-Defence*, upon so trivial an Occasion? Greater Men than Mr. Bennet, may possibly at some Time or other, have made such *Slips*: and therefore I presume, it will hardly amount to either Treason or Felony, tho' I shou'd happen to have taken Notice of some Failures in you, of that Kind. But let Us see what these *Self-Contradictions* are. And

*First*, Whereas you had told Us, that besides the *Psalms sung by the Levites in the Temple*, and some few other extraordinary Services, there is no Ground for Us to think, that there were any Prayers jointly offer'd to God by the Jews either in the Temple, or elsewhere (a). And soon after talk'd of several precompos'd set Forms of Prayer, which were penn'd at different Times, by their respective Church-Governors, and us'd by 'em in their publick Worship: and that there was no more Reason to doubt of their having and using a precompos'd settled Liturgy, than of our own having and using the Book of Common-Prayer, &c. And that both Priests and People did certainly join together in the Use of those precompos'd set Forms, several Times every Day (b). I did indeed apprehend some Inconsistency here: but cannot find that either I my self or my Friend who drew up the *Alphabetical Table*, have directly charg'd this upon you as a *Self-Contradiction*. You reckon, Sir, that seeming Inconsistency will disappear, if it be consider'd that those Passages relate to differing Periods of Time: that in the former, you speak of their Practice before and

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(a) Brief Hist. p. 18. (b) *Ibid.* p. 21. 22.]

under the *Babylonish* Captivity; and in the latter, of their Practice *after their Return* from thence. And I am so little solicitous to fasten the Charge upon you, that I readily give it up: and am content to allow, it was my Mistake: but can assure you, Sir, I was not aware of it, when I wrote that Paragraph: and therefore *my Conscience did not then fly in my Face*, as you imagine it did (a): Nor am I now ashamed to own, I was mistaken. That which, I believe, led me (as perhaps it may others of your Readers) into the Error was, that even in speaking of the Practice of the *Jews* in this *latter Period*; you still talk of the precompos'd set Forms, as what were establish'd among 'em, by *Inspired Persons*, *that is, by the command of God himself* (b). And the only *Scripture-Proof* you offer Us (which is all, that I can think worthy of regard, as Evidence of what was establish'd by *Inspir'd Persons*) does only tell Us, they did *sing together by Course after the Ordinance of David King of Israel*, *Ezra III. 10, 11.* (c) Whence I might be ready to conclude, that their Practice after their return from *Babylon*, was the same as before: And perhaps might too easily think, Mr. Bennet himself wou'd allow it too: And thereupon was too hasty to press you with the difficulty before Us. However I am willing to leave it with the Reader, whether this be any Difficulty upon you, or not: Provided you fairly answer, what directly relates to the Argument from the Practice of the *Ancient Jews*.

Secondly, What you next complain of, I never in the least intended to charge upon you as a *Self-Contradiction*; nor is it ever so call'd either in the *Book*, or *Index*: Much less a *heap of Self-Contradictions*, as you seem willing your Reader shou'd believe (d). But it is what I added as the close of the Argument between Us, so far as it relates to the Practice of the *Jews*, from the time of *Moses's*

(a) Letter, p. 18. (b) Brief Hist. p. 21. (c) *Ibid.* p. 20. (d) Letter, p. 20.



leading 'em out of *Egypt*, to their Return from the *Babylonish* Captivity. When I had gone thro' all the Proofs you offer'd, with relation to that Period; (and which you had told Us, were *undeniable Proofs, that the Jews join'd in precompos'd set Forms of Prayer* :) (a) At the Conclusion I observ'd, that *We have little Reason to admit these* (meaning what you had alledg'd) *or any others that you can bring, as undeniable Proofs that the Jews* (during this Period) *join'd* [i. e. did it *statedly*] *in precompos'd set Forms of Prayer* [especially such as were of *meerly Humane Original*] (b). For I then did, and still do conclude, that unless their Practice cou'd be made appear to come up to this; it wou'd not reach the Point at all in which We are concern'd. That the *Proofs* you had alledg'd did not reach the Point, I suppos'd what I had offer'd in Reply to 'em wou'd convince the Reader. And the following Words come in as a Reason why I thought, that no *Others* you cou'd bring wou'd be likely to do it: That We have little Reason to expect this to be prov'd by Mr. Bennet, I conclude *the rather, because He himself does elsewhere, in various particulars, plainly contradict it* (c). That this was all that I intended, my very Words themselves do so fully show, that (notwithstanding all you have said to put another Sense upon 'em) I am content to leave them with the Impartial Reader: And leave you to blush at all your vain and gaudy Triumphs upon this Occasion. Only before I pass further, to prevent any ill Impressions on Our Readers, I think fit to observe, that my leaving out those Words [*and some few other extraordinary Services*] of which you once and again complain (d); was not done with any ill design: But because I apprehended you thereby to mean *Sacrifices, Purifications, &c.* In which our Controversie was no way concern'd. And this you might have observ'd, in my *Review of the Case of Liturgies, &c.* p. 54. But since you

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(a) Brief Hist. p. 16. (b) Review, p. 64. (c) *Ibid.*

(d) Letter, p. 19. 20. and again, p. 29, 30.

have another Meaning, I am willing you shou'd make your best of it.

Thirdly, The next Instance is what I no where call a *Self-Contradiction*: Tho' I do not know but most Readers will (as well as the Gentleman that compos'd the *Index*) think it to be so. However 'tis not at all material, whether it be a *Contradiction* or not. If you do not now *contradict* the *Passage*, I quoted from your [*Answer to Thomas against Bennet*] then you must still allow, "That God has no where in Scripture appointed the Manner of Publick Prayer: And particularly, that He has no where commanded Us to pray in Publick by a Form, i. e. (as you now explain it) by a *precompos'd set Form*. For this is plainly the Sense of your Words, if I can understand 'em (a). Do but abide by this, Sir, and then perswade the World (if you can) that it is a *very Material Point*, whether We pray *Extempore*, or by the use of *precompos'd set Forms*, in Our Publick Worship.

Fourthly, The next Instance relates to the Testimonies you produc'd from *Austin*, and a Canon of the *Third Council of Carthage*: The former (*Austin*) you had alleg'd as a Witness in the IVth Century (b), and this *Council* as in the Vth. (c) Yet afterwards you tell Us, that this Canon was made before ever St. Austin took notice of those lamentably insufficient Persons [of whom mention was made in his Testimony] (d). Upon this I did indeed say, that unless (Mr. Bennet) can shew Us, how the FIFTH Century cou'd be before the FOURTH; this must be noted down for a flat Contradiction. (e) This I freely own, I charg'd upon you as a Contradiction. And 'tis so palpable an One, that you your self cannot deny it: 'Tho' if you knew

(a) *Answ. to Thomas, against Bennet*, p. 151.  
(b) *Brief Hist.* Chap. XV. (c) *Ibid.* Chap. XVI.  
(d) *Ibid.* p. 337. (e) *Review*, p. 318.

but how, you seem mighty solicitous to cover it. To this purpose you plead, "That whereas *Austin, Chrysostom, and Jerom* liv'd partly in One Century, and partly in the other; *Dr. Cave* places 'em in the *Fourth*, and *Du Pin* in the *Fifth* Century; yet no body will say, that *Dr. Cave* and *Du Pin* do contradict each other (a). Nor is there any Reason for it: Because living in both Centuries, they might (without so much as a Mistake) be plac'd in either. Tho' if either *Du Pin* or *Dr. Cave* had plac'd (for Instance) *Chrysostom* in the *Fourth* Century, and *Jerom* in the *Fifth*; and afterwards had told Us, that *Jerom* dy'd before ever *Chrysostom* begun to make a Figure in the World: it must have been allow'd (not only that there was a Mistake, some where or other in the Account; but also) such a Mistake as does amount to a Contradiction. Yet you are ready to flatter your self, that with all candid Judges this will be esteem'd a sufficient *Vindication* (b).

And at last, when you are forc'd to own it for a Mistake, yet you wou'd fain have it pass for a meer Mistake; and cannot prevail with your self to own, that it is a Contradiction: nay, you plainly reflect upon me, because I had given it that Name. And tell me, a small Measure of good Nature, wou'd have inclin'd me to give it a much milder Name. But why so angry, Mr. Bennet? Is it not a Contradiction, wou'd it not have been so, whether I had call'd it so or not? Does the Name I have put upon it, in the least change the Nature of the Thing? But perhaps, Sir, you might reckon upon it, that one of your extraordinary Merit, is never to be charg'd with a Contradiction: that tho' you shou'd never so plainly commit the Fault, in you (at least) it must be overlook'd. And if really you have any Patent to that Purpose, I must beg your Pardon, Sir, that I did not know it: but so soon as ever it appears, I shall know my Duty: And as apt as you reckon me to find Faults, I doubt not but

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(a) Letter, p. 44. (b) *Ibid.*



I shall for the future be able, as contentedly as any Person in the World, to allow you your Privilege.

Nay more, I find you cannot be willing so much as to own it a Mistake, without reproaching me (at the same Time) with greater Ignorance (a). *I have really committed a Mistake*, say you: 'Tis really a Contradiction, you shou'd have said: 'Tis well however you are got so far as this. Ay, but you add, *Which* (Mistake) *had you your self discover'd, I had been severely chastis'd*. The Thing which I perceive you are here afraid of is, lest I shou'd be thought to have made the *first Discovery*, that you was mistaken. And where had been the mighty Harm, supposing I had been allow'd to have *first* found out your Mistake? Can you not possibly bear, that such an Honour shou'd be done me; while yet, at the same Time, you are forc'd to confess, that you was mistaken? Pray Sir, Who was it that first gave you the Hint? I am really ashamed, that you shou'd force me to be (in Appearance at least,) a little vain: but this possibly may be a Means to bring down your great Spirit to the Circumstances you here are in. You confess, you have *really committed a Mistake*, with Respect to this *Third Council of Carthage*: Well, did no one hint it to you any Way? Did not I, by some Means or other, drive you to search into, and set it right? No, you tell me, *by this Instance I may learn, that you are ready of your own Accord, to acknowledge your Errors, tho' no Adversary drives you to it* (b). But pray, recollect your self, was it not *this Mistake* you had made with Respect to the Date of that Council, that occasion'd you to *contradict* your self? and by taking Notice of that *Contradiction*, did I not sufficiently tell the World and you, that you had made a *Mistake*? And what tho' I did not particularly tell, what was the Mistake: you are pleas'd to say, this *demonstrates my utter Ignorance of it* (c). Ridiculous! must a Man needs

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(a) Letter, p. 44. (b) *Ibid.* p. 45. (c) *Ibid.* p. 44.  
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write all that he knows? But here is another Evidence, how well Mr. Bennet is acquainted with the Nature of a *Demonstration*. However, Sir, (tho' I well knew, that the Third Council of Carthage was commonly agreed to be held in the Year CCCXCVII. and cou'd not but know the Date that is at the Top of every Page:) yet I am not still sure whether *Austin* wrote his Book [*de Baptismo*] before or after that Time: and therefore was not forward to determine, where the Mistake lay: but satisfy'd my self to observe there was a Mistake, and such a Mistake as at the same Time involv'd a Contradiction too. And now I hope you have enough of it: but if it be more than you desir'd, learn to be more free and ingenuous in your Acknowledgements for the future.

*Fifthly*, Another Instance is, that wherein you own, that 'tis possible in the Nature of the Thing, for a Congregation to join in an *Extempore* Prayer: This you allow: but deny, that you have any where said what does contradict it: and beg it as a particular Favour, that I wou'd shew it you. Now, Sir, you do (if I mistake not) in the Account you give us of *Joint-Prayer*, make it absolutely necessary, that the Persons joining in Prayer, do not only speak the same Words to God; but that they all speak at once (a): and afterwards you tell us, that no Man can, at one and the same Time, both attend to what is spoken *Extempore*, by the Person that officiates; and actually speak himself in his own Person, the very same Thing, to Almighty God (b). This (according to your Notion) is expressly to say, that 'tis impossible to join in an *Extempore* Prayer. And I yet beg you, if you can, to reconcile your self to your self at your Leisure.

*Sixthly*, the last Instance relating to *Attention* in Prayer, is what I do not any where call a *Contradiction* in my Book; tho' pointed at as a gross one

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(a) Disc. p. 11. (b) *Ibid.* p. 39.

in the *Index*. The Way you pretend to evade this Difficulty, is what I had upon the Spot, distinctly taken Notice of, and reply'd to (a). So that I am content to leave it entirely with the impartial Reader. Only here again, I must tell you, I despise your malicious Complaints, of my mangling your Words, and misrepresenting what you say after an abominable Manner. Those Kind of Arts I leave to them that need, and can be satisfy'd to use 'em. Nor am I in the least mov'd with your oft repeated Reflections, as if I had made the Self-Contradictions for you (b). For by this Time I am satisfy'd the Reader will be sensible, the Contradictions, those at least which I really charg'd upon you, are your own; and it will therefore lie upon you to get clear of 'em, as you can.

SECT. IV. Your next five Chapters are one continued Complaint of a Charge of *Forgery, Prevarication, &c.* under various Instances; with an Attempt to clear up your own Innocency, and retort back the Imputation upon me. Now 'tis the first alone, that I have so severely charg'd, and the Reader (perhaps) will yet be ready to conclude, I there had too much Reason for it. The Case in short was this; The Council of *Milevis* (if the Account we have of it shou'd be allow'd to be genuine, which yet I greatly question) did indeed appoint a few particular Prayers, under certain Heads, to be universally us'd within their Districts: but they were far from having furnish'd out a compleat Liturgy, for all Offices and Occasions. They were themselves aware, that there must still be other Prayers us'd. And the Point here in Debate between us is, What Order they pass'd with Respect to these other Prayers? You had oft, and with utmost Assurance told the World, that even these other Prayers, spoken of in the latter Part of the Canon, must be also such as had the Approbation of the Synod. Pray review your

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(a) Review, p. 423, 424. (b) Letter, p. 56. And again, p. 153.



own Words. "The Second Council of *Milevū* enjoins, that no Prayers at all shou'd be us'd in the Church, but such as had been approv'd by some of the more prudent Persons in a Synod (a). This you repeat over and over (b). And whereas Mr. *Clarkson* had said, that they might, according to this Canon, still use other Prayers, provided they were allow'd, either by some prudent Persons, or by a Synod: Your Reply (which you introduce with no small Measure of Contempt) is "that neither insufficient Persons, nor any others have any Liberty allow'd 'em by this Canon to use any Prayers, but what were approv'd by the more prudent Persons in a Synod. And a little lower you add, "The Council does not say, that the Prayers shou'd be either allow'd by some prudent Persons, or approv'd in Council; but it says, that they shall be approv'd by some of the more prudent Persons in a Synod, i. e. when actually assembled together and met in Council: and this (you say) is most evidently the Sense of the Canon, if the Greek and Latin Texts be compar'd together (c).

Now this does all of it most evidently relate to the latter Part of the Canon, where I found the *Latin* (even of that suspected Copy which you use) had express'd it *disjunctively*, [*nec aliæ omnino dicantur in Ecclesia, nisi quæ a prudentioribus tractata, vel comprobata in Synodo fuerint.*] And the *Greek Codex*, does not here make any Mention of a Synod, but only of the Approbation of the more prudent Brethren. [*Καὶ παντὲς ἄλλας κατὰ τῆς πίσεως μὴδέποτε περὶ ἐνεχθῆναι. ἀλλ' αἰτινες δὴ ποτε ἀπὸ τῶν συνεπωτέρων συνήχθησαν, λεχθήσονται.*] Upon this I did, (as I still apprehend, with just Cause) complain of your *Prevarication*. Had you not been advis'd of the *Disjunctive Particle*, expressly us'd in the Canon: had you not particularly taken Notice of it: I shou'd have pass'd this as a meer *Oversight*; and imputed it to Negligence, and Want of Care. But as the Case was

(a) Brief Hist. p. 107. (b) *Ibid.* p. 325, 326.  
(c) *Ibid.* p. 326.

circumstanc'd, I must confess, I cou'd not but think you knew what you said was false: and yet to support your tottering Cause, was willing to put upon your Readers with a bold Fiction. This I therefore call'd a palpable Prevarication: And I am really surpriz'd to find you here attempting a *Vindication* of it. What you offer for that Purpose, I now come to reply to.

And *First*, whereas you pretend, that the *Latin* Words are fairly capable of your Sense (a): and to this Purpose plead, that the Particle [*Vel*] may only disjoin the Words [*tractata* and *comprobata*] and not the Clauses. If this were granted, yet since it may also admit the other Sense, how could you tell the World, that *the Council does not say*, the Prayers shou'd *either* be allow'd by some prudent Persons, or approv'd in Council: *but it says*, that they shall be approv'd by some of the more prudent Persons in a *Synod*, &c. For hereby you absolutely exclude the other Sense, as if the Words of the Canon wou'd not so much as admit of it. And here, I hope, the Reader will observe, that tho' you now plead from the *Latin* Text, only for yours as a *possible* Sense: yet unless it had been the *necessary* and *only* Sense of the Words, your Assertion cannot be true; nor your Argument from this Canon valid.

But as the Words stand, (even tho' there were no other Reading, nor any *Greek* Text to determine the Point) I cannot allow yours to be so much as a *possible* Sense of 'em: unless We must suppose it *possible* that the Words [*a prudentioribus*] shou'd have no Meaning at all belonging to 'em, or what is worse than none. As the State of the Church then was, there was a great Deal of Reason to distinguish (as *Austin* himself had done) between the *Weak*, and the *more Prudent* among the Clergy at large; but it is somewhat unaccountable, to talk of the *more Prudent* Persons in a *Synod*: Besides, that this

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(a) Letter, p. 58.

wou'd carry an indecent Reflection upon some of their own Members, which surely they wou'd never do by a Vote of the whole Synod. Besides, every one, that knows any Thing of the Methods of Proceeding, among such Bodies of Men, knows, that they do not use to determine any Thing by the Judgment of the *more Prudent* in the Synod; but by the *Majority of Voices* there. I shall therefore leave it upon you, to make any tolerable Sense of the *Latin* Canon, as you wou'd have it read.

But Secondly, The *Greek* Text (and the *Latin* of the *African* Council) do fully give it against your Sense: for (as I said before) they do not so much as mention a *Synod*, in this Part of the Canon; much less make it necessary, that they shou'd have a *Synodical* Approbation of *all the Prayers*, they shou'd ever presume to use in Publick: all that (according to these Accounts) was insisted upon, amounts only to this, that whatever *other Prayers* they us'd (besides those which were expressly enjoin'd by this Synod) shou'd be first seen and allow'd by the *more Prudent* Brethren (a). And you cou'd not but observe, surely, that I had suspected some *Corruptions*, in what usually passes for the Canon of this Council (among other Reasons) because *that*, to raise the *Authority* of the Church, does (very needlessly) add the Mention of a Convocation or *Synod*: whereas these Collections (which are confessedly of a later Date than the *Milevitan Council*, in an Age when the Church's Power, among other Corruptions, was rather growing than in its Decline) does only provide, as was then necessary, that the *more prudent* Brethren shou'd revise the Prayers, in Order to prevent such as were *Heretical* (b). And now how cou'd you allow your self to say, "*that*

(a) Ἄλλ' αἵνες δύνανται ἀπὸ τῶν συνεσιωτέρων σωθήσονται, λεχθήσονται. *Codex Canonum Eccl. Afric. Can. 103.* Sed quæcunque cum prudentioribus fuerint collata, dicantur. *Concil. African. Can. 70.*

(b) Review, p. 326.



*fr. 59*  
 "none have any Liberty allow'd 'em by this Canon, to  
 "use any Prayers, but what were allow'd by the more  
 "prudent Persons in a Synod, that is, when actually as-  
 "sembled together, and met in Council? And how cou'd  
 you have the Face to refer to the Greek Text as  
 Evidence of this? Yet still you seem to persist in it:  
 and tell me, the Greek Text determines the Point, and  
 gives it for your Interpretation (a). What mean you,  
 Sir, to go on at this Rate? have you no Sense of  
 Shame left? Or is it, that you really expect, your  
 Readers will entirely depend upon your Veracity and  
 Integrity (b)? If any shou'd be weak enough to take  
 your Word, I am not out of Hopes, that some (at  
 least) will be willing to see with their own Eyes:  
 and that is all that I desire of 'em, before they  
 give Judgment in the Point here between us. What  
 you plead, that there is no Disjunction at all in the  
 Greek, is because in that Part of the Canon they  
 make no Mention of a Synod. But what, is their  
 not so much as mentioning a Synod there, plain Evi-  
 dence, that these more prudent Persons must neces-  
 sarily be met in a Synod, whenever they determin'd  
 any thing about this Matter! The suspected Copy of  
 this Canon says, "No Prayers at all shall be us'd in  
 "the Church, but such as have either been consider'd by  
 "the more prudent Brethren, or approv'd in a Synod.  
 The Greek Codex (as does also the African Council)  
 without the least Mention of a Synod, says, "that  
 "whatever Prayers have been consider'd by the more  
 "prudent Brethren, may be us'd: And Mr. Bennet  
 says, None have by this Canon Liberty allow'd 'em to  
 use any Prayers, but what were allow'd by the more  
 prudent Persons in a Synod, that is, when actually  
 assembled together and met in Council. And this, He  
 adds, is most evidently the Sense of the Canon, if the  
 Greek and Latin Texts be compar'd together. The  
 learned and impartial Reader will understand, that  
 this is only what you wish had been the Sense:  
 and (to the best of your Skill) endeavour therefore  
 to put upon the World as such.

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(a) Letter, p. 59. (b) Ibid p. 2.

Nay, (as if that wou'd serve to justify, at least to cover your own Guilt) you retort the Charge upon me: and I am *caught tardy*, as you wou'd persuade your Reader: and *you wish* (adding the awful Name of God to it, as if you were really serious) *that I had given you no greater Cause to charge me with such Crimes (as bold Falshood, Forgery, Prevarication, &c.) than you have given me to charge you with 'em* (a). Why, what's the Matter, Sir? What Cause have I given you any where, in the least, to insinuate a Charge of this Nature against me? Or indeed what Temptation cou'd I possibly be under to do such a thing? I that lay no Stress at all upon the Practice of the *Ancients*, further than they have *Scripture-Authority* for what they do: I, who had so freely declar'd how very little I value the Authority either of *Fathers or Councils*; what shou'd possibly tempt me knowingly to conceal the true, or to devise a false Sense of their Words! I will not say, that 'tis impossible I shou'd mistake their Meaning: but as I then did, so I still think, that I am the more likely to find out *their true Sense*, because under no Temptation (as Mr. Bennet plainly is) to force my own Sense upon 'em. But where have I, in the least, misrepresented either the Words or Sense of the *Greek Codex*? I had said (speaking of those Prayers, as to which the *Latin* [suspected] Copy allow'd 'em Liberty, provided they were either consider'd by the more prudent Brethren, or approv'd in a Synod) *that the Greek Codex is so far from limiting 'em expressly to what has been approv'd in a Synod, that it does only make the Approbation of the more prudent Brethren necessary, and does not so much as mention that of any Synod.* Upon this, Sir, you are pleas'd to catechise me very severely: And ask me, *how I can bear the World in Hand, that the Greek Codex does not limit 'em expressly to what has been approv'd in a Synod?* You go on, does not *κατασκευασμένη ἐν τῇ συνόδῳ* in the very first Line, make this express Limitation? And then add, *the Greek Codex speaks*

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(a) Letter, p. 63.

of the same Prayers, when it speaks of those that were *κατασκευασμένοι*, and those that *συνήχθησαν ἀπὸ τῶν συνετῶ-  
τερον*. And are not those enjoin'd, and all others forbid by this Canon? By the Way, where shall we find all others forbid? This is only what we may expect in the Canon, if ever Mr. Bennet shou'd bless the World with his Edition of the Councils. But have you done, Sir? Again, you ask me, how I can affirm, that the Greek Codex does not so much as mention the Approbation of any Synod? Does not *κατασκευασμένοι ἐν τῇ συνόδῳ* demonstrate the contrary? — The first Line of the Canon mentions and requires the Approbation of a Synod so plainly, that (say you) I wonder how you durst deny it (a). Now Sir, I appeal to all the World, whether ever I did, here or elsewhere deny that this Council had limited 'em expressly to any Forms: nay, I had expressly own'd, "that they did" (among other things) agree to draw up a few "Forms of Prayer, under diverse Heads: and that" "these Forms, being first read and approv'd of in" "the Council, were appointed to be us'd by all (b). I never said, that the Approbation of the Synod was not made necessary to any Prayers at all: but only, that it was not so to every Prayer they were at any Time to use in Publick (c). For Shame, Mr. Bennet, go no farther: Can any good Cause need such sorry Shifts as these? In a Word, the Canon does most evidently consist of two Parts: the former does relate to certain particular Forms, which were approv'd in Council, and universally enjoin'd: the latter (to which I had Respect in those Words of mine with which you are here quarrelling) does expressly refer to other Prayers, and (according to the Greek Codex) forbids the publick Use of all other Prayers that were contrary to the Analogy of Faith, but does allow of any others whatsoever that were compos'd or revis'd by the more prudent Brethren. Here it is that I did and still do contend, that there is not so much as Mention made of any Synod: and if you

(a) Letter, p. 62, 63. (b) Review, p. 327, 328.  
(c) *Ibid.* p. 322.



can find it, Sir, in this Part of the Canon; I'll be content you shou'd charge me with *bold Falshood*, *Forgery*, *Prevarication*, or what you please.

Whether you was your self sensible this wou'd clear the Point, I will not say: but as if you was, you do industriously confound both Parts of the Canon together: and wou'd persuade your Reader, (without the least Shadow of Proof) that the Prayers that in the first Line were *κευραμέναι*, or *probata in Concilio*, are the very same wth those which in the latter Words of it, *συνήχθησαν*, &c. and that *no other* Prayers but those appointed in the Beginning of the Canon, were to be us'd (a). And do beseech me *not to split* the Canon (b); tho' every one will see (whether you do or not) that it naturally falls into *two Parts*, as widely differing from each other, as I have represented 'em to the World. Your pert Reflections as if I never consider'd or understood the Words of the Canon (c); I leave to the Reader's Censure. When you say, I had *not the least Ground* to use you as I did, upon this Occasion (d): Surely you mean, that I had *not the least*, but what was much more than so. And the Reader will be ready to conclude, you forgot your self, when you (who write so much in Hast) advise me to *think so long* upon what I write for the future, as that nothing of this Kind may escape me (e). And when you add, that the very *best* of the *Non-Conformists* are *much inferiour* to a *very great Number* of your Brethren in *every Respect*: tho' I never said the contrary, yet few will think they are much the *better*, in any *Respect*, for being your *Brethren*.

Your *Second Instance* relates to the Sense of the Word *σίχος*, which since it is neither charg'd upon you as *Prevarication*, *Forgery*, nor *bold Falshood*, in the Book or Index, I shall wave; 'till you give me Occasion to consider afresh the Argument you have drawn from that Passage of *Chrysostom*.

The *Third* relates to the Advice of good *Chrysostom*

(a) Letter, p. 60. (b) *Ibid.* p. 61. (c) *Ibid.* p. 63.  
(d) p. 64. (e) *Ibid.*

to his Flock, that when their Minds had wander'd in Prayer, they shou'd immediately repeat the Petition over again, &c. (a). Now it did, and still does appear so plain to me (various Ways) that he here had an Eye to their solitary Prayers; that I did indeed express my self with a little (perhaps too much) Warmth, when I found you expressly call this [*the Prayer said in the Church.*] (b). But by the Way, I did not (tho' the *Index* does) expressly call it *Prevai-*  
*rication*. And you your self are now forc'd to grant, that some Things which he here says touching Prayer, do plainly relate to solitary Prayer (c): Yet before We cou'd hear nothing of this from you. Nay, you still pretend, that this Advice of *Chrysostom's* must relate to the Publick Church-Prayers: to support this, you argue from the Mention he before made of *νενομισμένοι ἐνχαί*, and from the Word *ἀπλόου* in the Passage it self referr'd to. And because this looks more like Argument than any thing in your whole Letter besides, I shall distinctly reply to it. And 1. *Chrysostom* does at the 25th Line of that Page begin to draw the Inference you speak of, wherein there is Mention made of the *νενομισμένοι ἐνχαί* (d): but I see not how it can thence be concluded, that from thence forward he must needs be understood of the Church-Prayers, especially while you your self are forc'd to own, he had been speaking of solitary Prayers just before. I readily allow you, that *νενομισμένοι ἐνχαί* signifies the Prayers appointed, or if you will enjoin'd by Law; but why, I beseech you, Sir, must that Law be the Rule laid down by the Church? what shou'd hinder, but it might be God's Law laid down in the Scriptures? I find the Lord's-Prayer it self he elsewhere calls *ἐνχαὴν τὴν νενομισμένην* (e). And whereas you pretend, that *Chrysostom* speaks in another Place, of Prayers that were enjoin'd by the Laws of the Church [*ἐκ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας νόμοι*]: You might have ob-

(a) Letter, p. 67. (b) Brief Hist. p. 200. (c) Letter, p. 73. (d) *Ibid.* p. 73, 74.

(e) *Οὐδέπω γὰρ ἐνχαὴν ἔχουσι τὴν νενομισμένην καὶ εἰσπνεύθεισαν ὑπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, &c.* *Chrysost.* Hom. II. in 2 Cor. p. 553. l. 20, 21.

serv'd, that *Chrysostom* does not use that Phrase, in the Sense of the later and yet more corrupted Ages: but those which he calls the *Church's Laws*, were the Rules or Precedents laid down in *Scripture*: To this Purpose he did a few Lines before the Passage you refer to (a), call 'em the *Old Law* that from Heaven was ordain'd for the Church: and in Evidence that it was so, he instances the Apostle *Paul's* Thanksgiving for the *Romans*, the *Corinthians*, &c.

Besides, where he speaks expressly of those *Laws* of the Church, he does not say, that any particular stated *Forms of Prayer* were appointed or enjoin'd by those *Laws* or *Rules*: but only in general, that they did oblige 'em to pray for the *Catechumens*, as well as for the *faithful* (b): And this is no more than what may be truly said of the *Scripture Rules* themselves.

Once more, when he mentions the [*τὰς νενομισμένας ἐντολὰς*] how does it appear, that the *Custom* or *Rule* (or whatever you wou'd call it) does fix the *very Prayers themselves*, the *Expressions*, or even the *Method* or *Matter* of 'em? Why may it not refer meerly to the *Season* of 'em? And this, I apprehend to be the plainest and most natural Sense; and every Way most agreeable to the Context. Holy *David*, he had observ'd before, did discharge that Duty to God, not only in the *Day-Time*, but also in the *Night-Season*: nay, even at *Mid-night*, he rose from his very Bed to do it: Now, if he, who was a great King, amidst all the vast Cares as well as Pleasures of a Court, cou'd find Leisure for his extraordinary Devotions, that were out of Course: He apprehended those who had much less Care and more Leisure upon their Hands, were justly to be reprov'd,

(a) Κὶ γὰρ ἀρχαῖος ἔστος ὁ νόμος ἔχειν, ἀνωθεν ἐν τῇ Ἐκκλησίᾳ πεφυτευμένος. Οὕτω καὶ Παῦλος εὐχαρισεῖ ὑπὲρ Ῥωμαίων, ὑπὲρ Κορινθίων, ὑπὲρ τῆς οἰκουμένης ἀπάσης.— Διὰ τοῦτο, καὶ τὰς ἐντολὰς ἔγω γίνεσθαι καλεῖσθαι οἱ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας νόμοι. Hom. II. in 2 Cor. p. 553. lin. 8, 9, 10, &c l. 13, &c.

(b) Τὰς [*ἐντολὰς ἔγω γίνεσθαι*] καλεῖσθαι οἱ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας νόμοι, ἔ τὰς ὑπὲρ τῶν πτωχῶν μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς ὑπὲρ τῶν κατηχημένων. Homil. II. in 2 Cor. p. 553.

that



that did not pray with due Watchfulness and Fervour, at the *common* and appointed Seasons, that is as I apprehend him, *Morning* and *Evening*. But this is so far from proving, that their Prayers (of which he here speaks) were *precompos'd*: that I cannot yet find, he has so much as chang'd the Subject of his Discourse, or that we now must understand him to speak of the Publick, or *Church-Prayers*.

And 2. Whereas you add, that there are some Circumstances in the Advice it self which *Chrysostom* here gives, from whence you conclude that he must needs mean the *Church-Prayers*; and particularly lay great Stress upon the Word [*ἀπὸλθουεν*] to this Purpose: I cannot see *where* the Force of this Argument lies. 'Tis true, he says *they went away*: but does he say, that they went away *from the Church*? or may not this be said when a Man has ended his *secret* Devotions, and leaves his *Closet*, as well as when he goes home from *Church*? So that I am at a Loss to know what this unlucky [*ἀπὸλθουεν*] will do for you: nor can I guess why you call it an *unlucky* Word, unless it was because (while you was to lay your main Stress upon it) you yet happen'd to leave it out of your large Quotation (a); as well as I (who, you are sensible had no *Purpose* to serve by it) left it out of my shorter one.

The *Fourth* Instance relates to the *Prayer which the Initiated knew* (b). And here again, 'tis the *Index*, and not the *Book*, that charges you expressly with *Prevarication*: tho' I must confess, I did greatly suspect somewhat here that was not over-fair. The Case was this; *Chrysostom*, upon a certain Occasion, tells us, that the Congregation utter'd aloud *what the Initiated knew* [*ἀπὸρ ἴσασιν οἱ μεμνημένοι.*] This you offer the World as Evidence, that the Christians did (in his Days) join in *other* precompos'd set *Forms* besides the *Lord's-Prayer*, &c. and whereas you had (in the very next Paragraph) Occasion to quote *Chrysostom* again, you leave out a Passage that wou'd

(a) Brief Hist. p. 200. in the Margin. Letter (b).

(b) Letter, p. 78.

(as

(as I thought) have made it *probable*, he intended *only the Lord's-Prayer* here; tho' you recite the immediately foregoing Words, and those that at a small Distance follow after. This Omission I did, and still do think has no good Appearance with it: tho' you your self do best know, whether you conceal'd it from the Reader here, lest it shou'd too plainly tell him what *Prayer* it was that *the Initiated* knew.

What you now pretend, that you judg'd this Passage *foreign to the Purpose* (a), does not at all tend to remove the Suspicion: If your *Purpose* was (not to find out what then was the Truth of the Fact, but by all Means possible) to persuade the World, they did join in *other precompos'd Forms besides the Lord's-Prayer*; it was indeed *foreign to your Purpose*: nay, perhaps more than so, diametrically *opposite* to it. I hope you did not therefore *apprehend*, it might be *best spar'd* (b).

Nor will it be sufficient to plead in your Excuse, that I my self own, *We are only left to guess* what that Prayer was, and *cannot now come at any Thing of absolute Certainty* in the Point (c): for tho' the Words which you omitted, wou'd not clear the Matter so far as to make it *absolutely certain*: yet if they only give some Light into it, so far as to make it *probable*, it was the *Lord's-Prayer* (which was all I intended when I said *they wou'd have clear'd the Matter*) they ought surely to have been laid before the Reader.

But when you add, that both that Passage of *Chrysostom*, and that of *Theodorit*, are *wholly foreign to the Matter under Debate*, and that you have *demonstrated em to be so* (d): I must confess it wou'd have surpriz'd me, Sir, if I had not been now pretty well acquainted with you, and your *Demonstrations*. We are, you know, enquiring after a certain Prayer that was us'd at the Ordination of the Clergy, of which *Chrysostom*, (to conceal it from the Catechumens) in a popular Discourse, only tells us, that it was *what*

(a) Letter, p. 81. (b) *Ibid.* (c) *Ibid.* p. 82, 83.

(d) *Ibid.* p. 86.

the Initiated knew. I suppos'd he might hereby mean the Lord's-Prayer. And to make this appear probable, I observ'd that Chrysostom himself elsewhere told Us, the Catechumens were not entrusted with the Lord's-Prayer [*ὁ κύριος ἡμεῶν*] and a little after calls it that awful Prayer which they were debarr'd or driven away from. And that Theodorit, a few Years after, tells us expressly, they did not teach this Prayer to those that were not initiated [*ὅτι τὰς ἀκατηχουμένους οὐ διδάσκουσιν*.] So that tho' this Prayer was not cut out of their Bibles, nor their Ears stopp'd when the Preacher treated of it (a) in his Sermons; I am content to leave it with the Reader, whether it be not probable, that this Prayer was us'd on those solemn Occasions, when the Catechumens were not allow'd to be present, and that this might be the very Prayer which Chrysostom then meant, when he spoke of the Prayer that the Initiated knew.

The last Instance, you complain of under this Head, relates to a pretended Demonstration, that the Apostles and others, in the Two first Centuries, never join'd in Extempore Prayers. When I had expos'd the Weakness of it, as I apprehended it deserv'd, I did indeed advise you "no more to put such thin Sophistry mix'd with meer Forgery upon the World for Demonstration. And I am at a Loss to know where the so great Severity of this Charge is to be found: (whether it was unjust We shall see by and by :) But why do you upon this cry out of hard Names, of Noise and Clamour, of Calumny and Reproach (b). The Sophistry I charg'd you with, tho' so thin as to be easily seen thro', yet was too gross (I am perswaded) to escape the Eye of the judicious Reader: and what you offer once and again (c), to banter and expose the Epithet, you had much better have let alone: for it only exposes your Ignorance in the most common Terms of the Schools; at the same Time that it also plainly shews, that 'tis none of Mr. Bennet's Talent, tho' he has

(a) Letter, p. 85. (b) Ibid. p. 109. (c) Ibid. p. 36. and again, p. 109.



a strong Inclination to be dabling in it. But 'tis the Charge of *Forgery*, *meer Forgery*, that you are most uneasy under. Alas, good Man, what's the Matter with you? Has any one wrong'd you? Yes, it seems, some Person or other has put you into a great Disorder, and fill'd your Head with frightful *Phantoms*; You seem to be disturb'd, just as Children are, with *raw Head and bloody Bones*, when there is no real Danger near 'em: I perceive you have been told that this Charge of *Forgery*, does necessarily imply a *deliberate Malice*, and a *settled Resolution to oppose God's Truth* (a): that 'tis a *black Charge*, under which you ought not to be silent, &c. (b) But Sir, whoever dress'd up my Charge in those dreadful Shapes, and put you under dismal Apprehensions of a *Pillory*, and I know not what besides; have really wrong'd both you and me. For I can assure you, I had no such Meaning in it. That Charge of *Forgery*, you may observe, does not relate to any *Testimonies*, or *Quotations*, produc'd, or pretended to be produc'd from others but to certain *Propositions*, or *Principles* which you had your self laid down, in order to support your *Demonstration*. It cou'd not therefore possibly be understood of such *Forgery* as you did imagine: All I did or could intend by it; was that the *Principles* you there laid down, were what had no real Ground, or Foundation in the Nature of things; but were *meer Fictions* or *Fancies* of your own, the *meer Creatures* or *Forgeries* of your own Brain: and what I therefore had before call'd, *weak and precarious Principles*. So that herein you see, I did not charge you with *base and odious Crimes*; with a *profligate Conscience*, &c. (c) but only with a *fruitful Imagination*, and a *weak Judgment*: and this, Sir, I hope is no Capital Offence; no such exceeding *heinous and provoking Imputation*, as that a Man must needs go down upon his Knees, to ask Pardon of God and the World for it (d).

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(a) Letter, p. 152. (b) *Ibid.* p. 151. (c) *Ibid.* p. 151. (d) *Ibid.* p. 110.

Well, but it seems you are not only uneasy under the *supposed* Charge, but resolv'd also to *justify* and abide by your *Demonstration*. And if you will do it, who can help it? tho' if you had any one wise Friend in the World, that you wou'd hearken to, I am apt to think you wou'd hardly ever have attempted it. But thus you begin: *My Paragraph, Sir, I still dare not only to acknowledge, but even to repeat and justify* (a). To *acknowledge* that it was yours, is what you was oblig'd to do, as an honest Man: it was indeed somewhat *daring*, to venture to *repeat* it; tho' if you did not now and then quote very liberally from your self, you cou'd hardly swell your Books to their present Size; and then it may be, the Copies wou'd not be altogether so beneficial to you. But that you also *dare to justify* it, shews there is hardly any thing that you *dare not* do. Here therefore I am ready to attend you.

And 1. Whereas I had said, *this Demonstration* of yours was *built upon very weak and precarious Principles*: You desire to be *excus'd*, if you don't *implicitly rely on my Judgment*: and beg me to *shew what those Principles* are, and *that they are weak and precarious* (a). And yet cou'd immediately quote my Words, which do at once shew both *what those Principles* were, and that they were *as* I had represented 'em; and consequently, that I neither expected you, nor any other Reader to *rely upon my Judgment* in the Case. And when you had recited my Words, which shew all you ask'd for; and pretend to consider, or as you call it, *take 'em in Pieces*: you never once pretend, either that *the Principles* I mention, (or any of 'em) are none of yours; or offer the least Grounds to support them, or any one of 'em. But only cavil with me for having said at first, that they were what you plainly *begg'd*, and *presum'd*, that *We wou'd grant you*: And afterwards, that you wou'd put 'em upon *Us*, as if they were either already *prov'd*, or else so *self-evident* as t

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(a) Letter, p. 87.

need no Proof. As if there was some strange *Inconsistency* in these Expressions (a). What do you mean Sir? do you not know, that all kind of Disputants have agreed to use these Terms promiscuously; and that by both, or either of these Forms of Speaking, they plainly mean, that the Propositions referr'd to, are *such as have no where yet been prov'd*? If you knew not this, you are (to be sure) wonderfully acquainted with the Methods of Disputation: If you did, and yet cou'd talk at this Rate; it shews, you are press'd to that Degree, as to talk downright Nonsense, that is out of the Way of the common Reader; rather than seem to him, to having nothing to say.

2. Tho' you further recite those Words of mine, whereby I did my utmost to *provoke you to prove* the Principles upon which your Demonstration proceeds, or any one of 'em to be true: yet still you do not in the least attempt it. Nay, as if this was no Business of yours, you do your best (according to the Wit you have) to laugh me out of Countenance, for having so much as expected it from you. What else can you mean, when you say, "Mr. Robinson challenges and hectors. Let's see the Vigor of your Words, &c. (b) And again, "If Saying were Proving, and big Words wou'd pass for Arguments, this one Passage wou'd confute a thousand Volumes. But pray, Sir, does the Proof here lie upon you, or me? I hope you don't expect, I shou'd vindicate your Propositions for you, no nor so much as rest satisfy'd in 'em; meerly because you call the Argument they belong to a *Demonstration*. What then is it, that I have here lying upon me to prove? But you go on, "Alas, Sir, your *defying me* and all the World, is "a meer *Scare-crow*. As if I had given a general Challenge to you and all the World; whereas I expressly limited it to one particular Point; which tho' thus urg'd to it, I cannot prevail with you to

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(a) Letter, p. 88, 89. (b) *Ibid.* p. 89, 90.



prove. You add, that you *presume I have not already forgot what you have hitherto been doing, &c.* (a). By which, I imagine, you wou'd be thought thus far in your *Letter* to have done some mighty Feats; but *what* they are, and where to find 'em, the Reader as well as I, by this Time will want to know. Yet after all, if you had (upon other Points) done never so wonderful Things; surely that ought not here to be put upon me: when I am calling you, and by all Means possible *provoking* you, to give us some Proof of the *Principles*, upon which you build the *Demonstration* now in Debate. I hope, you cannot, will not, *dare not* say, that you have hitherto been proving *those Principles* to be true: and if not, (since this is what I *challenge* you, and all the World to do) to what Purpose do you tell me, of what you *have hitherto been doing*?

3. Whereas I had further pleaded, that your *Demonstration* also *proceeded upon Connexions and Consequences that wou'd not hold, supposing your Assertions* (or *Principles* laid down in it) *had not been altogether false*: You eagerly lay hold upon this *Supposition* of mine, tho' it is what I never *granted*. Nay more, you take this Opportunity to put upon me *Principles* that I never did so much as *suppose*; those that never were inserted into your *Demonstration* (b): as will plainly appear to any one that compares the *Principles* you now mention, with those which you immediately after quote, as *suppos'd* by me. That is to say, you very reasonably wou'd have me *suppose*, that you have made good every thing, that you undertook to prove, in all other Parts of your Book; that so this single Paragraph may seem to be *somewhat* to the Purpose. And is this what any one Man in the World, besides Mr. Bennet, wou'd yet call a *Demonstration*.

4. Whereas I had argu'd, that if *such Changes themselves are not impossible* (meaning Changes that are

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(a) Letter, p. 90. (b) *Ibid.* p. 91.

brought about by *insensible Degrees, &c.*) then 'tis impossible to demonstrate that they never happen'd (a). You do, in the room of these, substitute such *Changes* as *cou'd not but have been known*, if they had happen'd: and then deny the Consequence. But I beseech you, Sir, what *Changes* are those? Is this particularly now in Dispute, of such a Nature, and so circumstantiated, that whatever *Changes* have at any Time, or any where happen'd in relation to it, must needs have been recorded? If not, how can it ever be *demonstrated*, that in one or other Period, there was not any such Change made; even tho' it should not be recorded. Nay, tho' it were allow'd (yet further) that the *Changes*, had any happen'd, must needs have been recorded: yet since Historical Records are what may possibly be lost, or destroy'd; the meer *Silence* of History in any Case, will not surely (with any considering Reader) be allow'd to be *Demonstrative* Evidence, that no Change ever happen'd. I here wave the Notice of several strange and unaccountable Imperinencies, because I am not at Leisure to follow you, whenever you think fit to start fresh Subjects of Debate.

5. At last you come to what I propos'd, as a *Parallel* to your *Demonstration*: and here you are not willing to allow the Way of Reasoning to be yours, (since 'tis apply'd by me to a different Subject) unless the Case upon which I argu'd, had been parallel to what you take yours to be (b). Now I thought it had been enough, if the Case I put was (so far as the Argument requir'd) parallel to what yours really is; without ever imagining, that it was necessary for me to know, what you took it to be, or not to be. And therefore (however you may take it) I am willing to refer it to the judicious Reader, whether the two Cases, upon a just Comparison, be not really parallel. And thus, in short, the Matter stands between us.

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(a) Letter, p. 93. (b) *Ibid.* p. 95.

The Point you pretend to demonstrate is an *universal Negative*: So also is what the *Pagan*, I only personated, is to undertake. Your Demonstration relates to the very *Beginning* of the *Christian Church*: as his does to the *Beginning* of the *World*. You are to prove, that the Christians in the first Ages of the Church, never us'd that Way of Praying which you call *Extempore*: He is to prove, that Mankind in the first Ages of the World, never us'd to worship *one only God*. And now where is the Disparity? You pretend as a Difference, that the *Pagan* has no Practice of *immediately preceding* Times to argue from, because his Period is from *the Beginning of the World*: He may reply, neither have you any properly *Christian Practice* in the *preceding* Times, because your Period is from *the Beginning of the Christian Church*. If you plead, that the Supposition made (in Favour of *Polytheism*) touching the *immediately succeeding* Times, is false: It may be reply'd, that neither has the Supposition you made (in Favour of *precomposed Forms*) in the Times *immediately succeeding*, ever yet been prov'd true. In short, Sir, tho' I am no Friend to the Cause of *Polytheism* and *Idolatry*, and far from designing it any *Kind* of Service: yet I dare undertake to *demonstrate*, that in the *Beginning of the World*, they never publicly worshipp'd *one only God*; so soon as ever you have truly demonstrated, that in the *Beginning of the Christian Church*, they never publicly pray'd *Extempore*. Begin whenever you please, I am ready to attend you.

SECT. V. In your next Chapter, you call me to an Account for having charg'd you with a Couple of Blunders(a): and here again you complain, that *I have wrong'd you grossly, and (in Spite of your own plain Sense and exprefs Words) have made you blunder, on Purpose to expose you (b).* Whether the Blunders are mine, what *I made* for you; or properly your own, what *I found* ready made to my Hands, will immediately appear.

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(a) Letter, Chap. XIV. (b) *Ibid.* p. 153.



Now the first Charge I advanc'd against you of this Kind is, that you do perpetually confound *Joint-Prayer* with *Publick*: And *Private* with *Solitary Prayer*: As if you did not understand the Difference of the Names. And here, the true *Logical* Way of distinguishing the Kinds of Prayer, I then did (and still do) conceive to be thus: Prayer is either *Solitary*, or *Social*: *Solitary* (otherwise call'd *secret*) Prayer, is that wherein each one prays alone by himself: *Social*, is that wherein a Person prays together with others. And this latter Kind of Prayer, call'd *Social* or *Joint-Prayer*, is to be sub-distinguish'd into *Private*, or *Publick*: *Private*, may be either *stated*, with our own Families; or *Occasional*, upon special Emergencies with a few particular Friends: *Publick*, is that which is offer'd up to God in the Church-Assemblies; which may also be either *stated*, at certain returning Seasons, whether Weekly, Annually, &c. or *Occasional*, upon extraordinary Occurrences of Providence. He that intends to talk or write, with any tolerable Measure of Accuracy and Clearness, upon the Subject; must carefully distinguish these several Kinds of Prayer, at least in his own Mind. But Mr. Bennet, I am afraid, understands as little of the true Method of *distinguishing*, as he does the just Nature of *Definitions* and *Demonstrations*. For you still seem resolv'd to go on in your confus'd Way of talking: Nay, as if you was incurable, you will by all Means, have me to be the *Blunderer*: Because I cannot be content to *blunder* as you do.

But is there then no *Medium*, between *Publick* and *Solitary* Prayer? Yes, Sir, you do your self allow it in Effect, by distinguishing between Prayer that is *more* or *less* *Publick*: Which would have been tolerable, had we not been provided with a proper and well known Term, whereby to express that which is *less* publick: And which at the same Time has a fixed *Idea* belonging to it, that does at once distinguish it from what is *Publick*, and from what is *Solitary*: And that is

(as



(as I said before) *Private Prayer*. And that you had confounded that Kind of Prayer, signified by this middle Term, with both the other Sorts; was what I expressly took Notice of: So that it was not a single, but a double Blunder, that I did and still do here blame you for. *Family-Prayer* was what I instanc'd in; which tho' 'tis not *Publick*, yet neither is it *Solitary*. Not *Solitary*, because at least two or more join in it: Yet not *Publick* neither, unless you will also confound *Private Persons*, and those who have a *Publick Character*; the *Affairs* of a particular *Family*, and those of the *Publick*, &c. For the Grounds of the Distinction are alike, and 'tis equally apt in one Case as in the other. However I am glad you now own, that *Joint-Prayer* cannot reasonably be confin'd to those offer'd up in *Church-Assemblies* (a): Which I chuse to call *Publick Prayers*. But when you add, that you never so confin'd it: And challenge me to find the Place, if I can, You seem strangely to have forgot your self. This is what plainly runs thro' your Book, and thro' every Part of it; unless you can nicely distinguish between a *Congregation* and a *Church-Assembly*. When you explain your first Proposition, (viz. that the ancient *Jews*, Our *Savior*, and his *Apostles*, and the *Primitive Christians* never join'd in any *Prayers*, but precompos'd set Forms only :) do you not wave the Consideration of what you call their *private Prayers*, in which they did not join with others: and expressly tell us, that all you now pretend to is, that when they bore a Part with others, in the common Worship of a *Congregation*, they never join'd in any *Prayers* but such (a). If this is not to confine your self to the *Prayers*, that they offer'd up to God in *Church-Assemblies*, I cannot understand plain *English*. And what mean you, in your next Proposition, when you say, of the Forms in which they join'd, that they were such as the respective *Congregations* were accusom'd to, &c. Does it not shew, that you wou'd have us understand

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(a) Letter, p. III. (b) Brief Hist. p. 14, 15.

you of their joining with those Congregations? In short, if you wou'd not have your very *Title Page*, and a great Part of your Book pass for *meer Non-sense*; you must own, that by *Joint-Prayers*, you meant only *Church-Prayers*. But I am weary of multiplying Words in so plain a Case.

There is still behind *another Blunder*, which I happen'd to take Notice of; and that was your confounding *one single Form*, with *diverse Forms*: but you say, *this horrid Blunder is a downright Falsification of your express Words: and that I have mangled your Words on Purpose to expose you* (a). But why so angry, Mr. Bennet? This is not the first *Blunder* you ever made: and I dare engage it will not be your last, if you go on to indulge this *Scribbling Humour* of yours. And therefore be easy, Sir, you know 'tis but a *small Matter* (b). But *small* as it is, I never wou'd nor durst have rather'd it upon you, if it had not really been your own. And why shou'd you now disown it? Do you not *begin and end your Account of the Practice of the Apostles with one single Instance of a Form of Prayer!* Do you so much as pretend to produce *any more!* yet did you not at first undertake to shew, that (besides the *Lord's-Prayer* and *Psalms*) they join'd in *diverse precompos'd set Forms!* Read your own Words again, 'Tis plain that they (the *Apostles* and our *Lord's other Disciples*, of whom you had been speaking throughout that Paragraph) *us'd precompos'd set Forms in their Christian Assemblies, during the Remainder of their Lives; as all their Fellow Christians also did in the following Ages* (c). This (you add) *I shall make appear: This: What, I pray? Why that the Apostles and our Lord's other Disciples did use precompos'd set Forms, &c.* And *how* will you make it appear? Why, from *their joining in the Use of the Lord's-Prayer, and in the Use of Psalms, and in the Use of diverse precompos'd set Forms of Prayer besides these. They* (i. e. the *Apostles* and our

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(a) Letter, p. 115. (b) *Ibid.* p. 153. (c) Brief Hist. p. 28.



Lord's other Disciples) did *all this*; as *all their Fellow Christians* also did in the following Ages. This is the Natural Sense of your Words, if I can understand them. 'Tis not *they* us'd *one single* Form, and the Christians of after-Ages *others*; and so *they*, and those of *after-Ages* put together us'd *diverse* Forms: but *they* themselves us'd *diverse* Forms, as *also* did their Fellow-Christians in after Times. So that unless you can make *one* and *diverse* to be Terms of the same Signification and Extent, the *Blunder* is still chargeable upon you as *your own*.

SECT. VI. Yet as if you had now fully clear'd your self, you are (it seems) at Leisure to attack me. And the *first* Thing, you have thought fit to fall upon is a *Passage* of mine, touching the Author of the Tract *de Spiritu Sancto*. This Tract you had attributed to *Basil*: whereas I did first only very much *suspect* that it was spurious (a); upon a further View Mr. Coke's Arguments (it seems) did *appear* (to me) *unanswerable* (b); and at last being fully satisfy'd in the Case, I have ventur'd to rise yet higher, and call it a *notorious Forgery* (c). Now this Method of Proceeding, is what every careful Writer surely will pursue: to speak more modestly at first; and then to rise in his Expressions, as his Evidence grows upon him. I hope you did not intend, that the Mention you here made of it, shou'd turn to my Reproach; tho' it is, I must confess, very widely differing from the Way that is usual with Mr. Bennet: and therefore might seem somewhat strange to you.

But to proceed to the *Passage* it self. I had, after the learned Mr. Coke, argu'd that the Author of that Tract, cou'd not be the true *Basil*; because in the Mention of *Meletius's* Testimony, he speaks of him as of one that had liv'd and dy'd several Years before. Now the Force of the Argument is this, "A Person that was *Meletius's* Contemporary, that

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(a) Review, p. 194. (b) *Ibid.* p. 195. (c) *Ibid.* p. 330.

“ was ordain’d by him, that was his Familiar Friend,  
 “ that oft corresponded by Letters with him, and  
 “ that dy’d about *three* Years before him cou’d ne-  
 “ ver speak of *Meletius* as this Writer does: But  
 “ the true *Basil* was his Contemporary, and Fami-  
 “ liar, &c. Therefore the true *Basil* cou’d not be  
 “ this Writer. You own the *Minor* Proposition  
 entirely, viz. that the true *Basil* was this *Meleti-*  
*us’s* Contemporary, his Familiar, &c. and that he  
 dy’d before his Friend *Meletius*. But still think he  
 might speak of *Meletius* as this Writer does. What!  
 cou’d the true *Basil* that dy’d first, speak of *Me-*  
*letius*, as one that had liv’d and dy’d *several* Years  
 before his Time! No (say you) the *Author* of this  
*Tract* does not so speak of him: and to make this  
 appear, you give us a Translation of that Author’s  
 Words, vastly differing from that which (after the  
 great *Erasmus*) I had ventur’d upon. The only  
 Point here in Question between us is, which is the  
 true Translation. If mine be, you expressly own *my*  
*Argument is really unanswerable* (a). And notwithstan-  
 ding your poor pedantick Exception to it, with  
 which you set out at first; that *εἶναι* is of the *pre-*  
*sent Tense*, [which yet you cannot (sure) but know,  
 as by all Kind of Authors frequently us’d, in speak-  
 ing of things that were long before said or done:]  
 You do at last offer to compound the Matter; and  
 seem willing to admit the Words are capable of  
*my Sense*, as well as *yours*. But then you add, that  
*nothing less than the absolute Necessity of my Tran-*  
*slation can support my Argument* (b). Well Sir, if  
 that will satisfy you, I am prepar’d to prove, that  
*my Sense* of the Words is *absolutely necessary*. And  
 here, I shall wholly wave the Mention of the *great*  
*Authorities*, which I have for my Translation: tho’  
 I cannot but observe to you, that in a Point of  
*Criticism*, or the rendring of an *ambiguous Phrase*, the  
 Judgment of such Men as *Erasmus*, carries another  
 Kind of Weight with it; than it does, or ought  
 to be allow’d, where *Conscience* is directly con-

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 (a) Letter, p. 121. (b) *Ibid.*

cern'd. So that when you wou'd make the two Cases Parallel, I suppose you intend to convince the World, that your Skill in *Casuistical Divinity* is much about the same Size, with what you have shewn in *Logick* and the *Mathematicks*. Nor shall I insist upon the *Epithet*, [*ὁ πάλιν*] here apply'd to *Meletius*; tho' I do not remember, that ever I observ'd it to be apply'd to any Person, while he was still among the living. Nor shall I argue from the Company with whom he is here rank'd, such as *Clemens Romanus*, *Irenaus*, *Dionysius Alexandrinus*, *Origen* and *Gregory Thaumaturgus*, who were all Persons of ancient Standing, at that Time, in the Church. But what I lay the principal Stress upon, is the immediately following Words [*καὶ ἢ δὲ τὰ παλαιὰ λέγειν*;] *But why* (says he) *do I speak of what was done and said in ancient Times?* And then he proceeds to tell us, how it was among those that were then living both in the *Eastern* and *Western* Parts of the World. Now can any thing be plainer, than that he speaks of *Meletius*, as one who was (at that Time) a Person that had liv'd in *ancient Days*: and of his Testimony, as what had very particular Weight, upon that Account? And cou'd this have been done by a Man that was *Contemporary* with him, that was ordain'd by him, that was his intimate *Familiar* and *Acquaintance*, that as such oft corresponded by *Letters* with him, and (to add no more) that dy'd several Years before him; as you your self allow the true *Basil* did?

And now Sir, I am very willing to refer it to any Man that understands *Greek*, whether the *Translation* (upon which my Argument was built) be not just and true, and such as the Words do not only admit, but even require: whether it be not (as you require) *absolutely necessary*; and whether my Argument from thence, to prove *that Tract* (in Part at least) *spurious*, does not yet remain in its full Force; after all that you have offer'd to invalidate it. And if *Meletius* therefore was really murder'd (a);

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(a) Letter, p. 121.



(for I am not ashamed to own, I cannot tell whether he was, or not:) I hope however, it will be allow'd, that I had no more Hand in it; than you had in the Murder of *Julius Caesar* (a). But what Apology will you now make for your self to the World! Is this your Way of shewing my Argument to be *inconclusive* (b)? and do you ever expect, that this shou'd convince my Reader, that it has *nothing of Strength* in it (c)? Had you really any just Ground for your after-Triumphs upon this Occasion? I hope by this Time you are satisfi'd, that I had some Reason for the Assurance with which I spake upon this Head: that I did not proceed upon a *gross Mistake*, much less did I bluster upon the *grossest Mistake*, as you say I did: and that *the Folly and Weakness* (d) which you have discover'd, is your own, Sir, and none of mine.

SECT. VII. Your next Attempt is, to expose my Want of Skill in *Ecclesiastical Antiquity* (e): To this Purpose, you have furnish'd out an entire Chapter, of above 12 Pages. And can you really think, this was worth your while. Yet as if this had not been enough, you afterwards tell me, *that I am ignorant of such Matters to such a Degree, as one wou'd think impossible, in a Person that had but barely dipt into 'em* (f). And what shou'd be the Reason of all these Reflections? Have I any where made Pretensions to extraordinary Skill that Way? No, Sir, I do assure you, I could never find that strong Sense, or good Learning in either the *Councils or Fathers*, as wou'd invite me to spend much of my Time in 'em. And when I have now and then, at Leisure Hours, dipt into 'em: I have frequently been ready to bewail the Time as lost, that has been so employ'd. I do allow, there may be some good Use made of 'em, in an *Historical Way*: but I really pity those that read 'em as *Expositors* of Scripture; or to form

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(a) Letter, p. 161. (b) *Ibid.* p. 118. (c) *Ibid.* p. 120. (d) *Ibid.* p. 157, 158. (e) *Ibid.* Chap. XVI. (f) *Ibid.* p. 159.

their Notions by 'em either in *Positive, Controversial, or Casuistical* Divinity. I am not ashamed to own, that many a Time, when I have been quite tir'd with the Reading of some, and those (it may be) the more ancient of 'em too; I have bless'd God upon my bended Knees, that I had such Authors to converse with as *Bates*, and *Howe*, and *Charnock*, or even *Baxter*, and *Manton*, &c. whom you so much despise. And now therefore to be sure, I am as ignorant as you cou'd wish. Nor do you need to wonder, that my Attainments in this Kind of Learning do not exceed even Mr. *Baxter's*, or Mr. *Clarkson's*: nay, tho' you scornfully mention theirs as the very lowest Measure, with which to humble me; yet I do assure you, I shou'd be proud of either of their Attainments. And no Wonder while those who are equal Judges with the admirable Dr. *Maurice* himself, I am apt to think will say, that their Measure of Skill in these Things, is what even Mr. *Bennet* (conceited as he is) will hardly ever reach.

And now, I hope, you have your End, Sir, I own my Ignorance in these Things: I am as ignorant as Mr. *Baxter*, or Mr. *Clarkson*: nay, I freely confess (beyond all that you seem to suspect) that I am yet more ignorant than they. But what then! Does this at all concern the Argument between Us? I never knew, or imagin'd, that to be the Point in Debate; whether I had any *Skill*, or what Measure of *Skill* I had in *Ecclesiastical Antiquity*? Why do you therefore start a new Subject of Debate? The more ignorant I am, the greater surely is your Advantage, and your Conquest will be the easier. When therefore the Reader finds, that instead of a Reply to the main Arguments in my *Review*, you are fain to make Use of such Shifts as these; he will be ready to conclude, there is *somewhat else* in it, that grieves you much more than my Ignorance does: and that how ignorant soever I am, Mr. *Bennet* is not the fittest Person in the World to reproach me with it.

But after all how does it appear, that I am so very ignorant in *Ecclesiastical Antiquity*? Why, it seems,

seems, I had pretended to offer some Considerations that might a little weaken the Authority and Esteem of the Council of Laodicea: For Instance, I had said, that that Church was in St. John's Days ignorant and lukewarm; and that we are not sure, they were now so much better, as to be a fit Pattern for other Churches to imitate: That it is not agreed when this Council met: That one very ancient M S. makes no mention at all of it, (for it was not Dr. Pappus's having publish'd a Synodicon; but that he publish'd it from a very ancient M S. that I laid the Strefs upon): And That there were only 22 Bishops at it (according to Caranza) whose Jurisdiction therefore could not reach far.

Whether these Arguments have more or less of Strength in 'em, is what I am not very solicitous about: Because the Point they refer to, is not material, in my Opinion: However, *valeant quantum valere possunt*. But when you have taken 'em to Pieces, and made 'em look as ridiculous as you can; I am at a Loss to know, how the Reader will by this judge of my Skill in Ecclesiastical Antiquity. Unless you your self could have told us, with Certainty, that they were grown better in that Part of the World, than they had been in St. John's Days: Unless you could have fix'd the determinate Time when this Council met: Unless you could either have prov'd, that Dr. Pappus's M S. does mention this Council; or at least, that 'tis not a very ancient one: Unless you could assure us, that there were more than 22 Bishops present there, and who they were, and how far their Jurisdiction did extend; whatever there might be defective in the Arguments, it cannot properly be call'd Ignorance in Ecclesiastical Antiquity: Or if it be, thus far (at least) Mr. Bennet appears to be as ignorant as I.

But the main Proof of my Ignorance, is that I apprehended the Bishops met in that Council to have been grossly ignorant and superstitious: So dangerous a thing is it, to animadvert in the least, upon the most apparent Follies of Councils and Fathers! If every thing they did, or determin'd to be done, be not for that very Reason admir'd and reverenc'd: If a  
Man



Man do but hesitate in the Case; and tell the World, that he finds such Weaknesses with them, as proves them to have been *but Men*; at least, if he do but insinuate, that they were not the *very wisest Men* in the World; his Reputation is all immediately forfeited to the Church: And there are always such little Officers as Mr. Bennet in Readiness, to seize for the Church's Use, or at least in the Church's Name. If this be not so, what can be the Meaning of it, that I am thus us'd? Have I said any thing worse than this concerning 'em? 'tis true, I have intimated that, in some Matters, they were ignorant and superstitious: Yes, grossly so, if you represent me right. But how? So grossly ignorant and superstitious, as that no wise or good Man will surely pay much Deference to their Determinations: And so, as that for my own Part, I shall hardly ever reverence their Judgment so far, as out of Respect to them, to fall in Love with Forms of Prayer. This is very little more than if I had said there are such Appearances of Ignorance and Superstition in some of their Decrees, as do convince me they were not infallible in any of 'em. And if you please, Sir, I do allow you to substitute this, in the Room of my former Way of Expression.

What so great Occasion therefore was there, that you should cry out of my Fury; and, in a scoffing Way, beg that I would be merciful! But when you plead, the Respect that is due to Gray-Hairs, and that they are my Elders: If you only mean, that they liv'd before me; so did also the Fathers of the Holy Council of Trent: If that the Council really was compos'd of much elder, and much graver Men than I am; you tell me what I did not know. So ignorant was I in Ecclesiastical Antiquity! But Mr. Bennet (such is his extraordinary Skill that Way) that to be sure he knows the Name of every Man among 'em, what Furniture each of 'em had, and what at that Time was the Age of every one of 'em punctually to a Day.

The Reflections you afterwards make on Occasion of my mentioning some of their Canons; I shall  
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not, now at least, particularly examine: only give me Leave to tell you, upon the whole, that you have greatly mistaken my Design. It never was in my Thoughts to *criticize* upon the Decrees of that Council, in Order to discover which were genuine, or which were spurious: Yet all your little, impotent Reflections proceed upon this Mistake of yours: What I did, was barely to *relate* Matter of Fact, and then leave it with the Reader, not whether such Practices were to be found in that Age or not; but whether Clergy-Men, who when they were got together, did busy themselves about such *frivolous* (not to say *ridiculous*) Things, could be thought worthy of any great Regard or not. And I am still willing to leave it to his Judgment. But Mr. Bennet (I find) with all his Skill in *Ecclesiastical Antiquity*, does not yet know the Difference between a Critick, and a meer Historian. Else he wou'd never have pretended upon this Occasion, to expose me as *one strangely qualify'd for a Critick* (a): and scoffingly have call'd, what I here propos'd, *the very Quintessence of Criticism, &c.* (b)

SECT. VIII. In your next Chapter you endeavour to expose me, on the Account of my *Ways of answering Arguments*. But if my *Answers* had really been what you here represent 'em to the World; you might with the same Ease and Expedition have furnish'd out a *Reply* to my Book, as have wrote this scandalous *Letter*. The Reader therefore (perhaps) will want to know, why you did not rather do it: But the Reason is plain, Mr. Bennet found it much easier to *misrepresent and reproach* my *Answers*, than to *reply* to 'em. And as I never expect from you a just and fair *Reply*: so I am free to tell you, that I despise all your silly ridiculous Attempts, whereby you wou'd fain expose me to Contempt.

Do I answer you any where, by *leaving out what I cannot answer* (c)? Yes, Sir, you tell me so: but

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(a) *Letter*, p. 134. (b) *Ibid.* p. 127. (c) *Ibid.* p. 135.

where, I beseech you? Why, you had said, that *Moses's Song of Thanksgiving at the Red Sea*, was a precompos'd Form of Prayer: I allow'd that it was a Form, and that it was precompos'd: but said it was rather to be call'd a *Song of Praise*, than a Form of Prayer: by which I did not mean, that it had nothing of the Nature of Prayer in it; but that it was not *such Prayer* as is in Dispute. This is plain, from what I afterwards added in that very Paragraph, concerning the Practice of the *English Dissenters*. And now let the Reader judge, what I have left out, or what you had said that was material upon that Point, that I have not answer'd.

Again, Do I any where propose an *Objection against an Argument*, without taking any Notice of the Answer actually given to that Objection (a)? So you would persuade your Reader. Because in Answer to the Charge of *Obscurity*, which you had represented as unavoidable in *Extempore Prayers*; I had reply'd, that I hardly ever observ'd an *OBSCURE Expression* in the Prayers of our Ministers. You say, 'tis impossible, even for the most able Teachers, to pour forth *EXTEMPORE Prayers*, in such a Manner, as that the *Vulgar* shou'd apprehend the Sense, &c. (b) I say, I hardly ever observ'd such an Expression from any of 'em: I thought it wou'd have been understood, that tho' I instanc'd in what I my self had heard (as how shou'd I do otherwise) yet I did not barely mean, the Expressions were intelligible to me; but what I judg'd wou'd be so to the meaner Capacities. And as to the *obscure Expressions* in the Liturgy, which I return'd you: I hope they do sufficiently prove, that this Imperfection may possibly happen in the Use of a precompos'd Form, as well as in an *Extempore Prayer*: which was all I intended by it. And what is there, I beseech you, in all that you have quoted from your self (c), that does in the least affect the Point in View? Tho' the Meaning may afterwards be enquir'd out by

(a) Letter, p. 141. (b) Disc. p. 106. (c) Letter, p. 145, 146.



the most ignorant: yet that Enquiry never may be made: or, in many Parishes in England, I dare engage, it may be made in vain. However, that it may need such an Enquiry, sufficiently shews, that Obscurity of Expression is not peculiar to our Way of Praying. Which was the only Point I then had before me.

Have I said that your arguing upon a certain Point, is so insufferably trifling, that I forbore the Recital of it, lest it shou'd be nauseous to the Reader (a)? I am still willing the Reader shou'd be Judge, whether I therein did you any Wrong or not. But do assure you, that (to use your own admirable Dr. Maurice's Word's) I wou'd as soon chuse to dispute with a Paper-Mill, as spend my Time in replying continually to such sorry Trifles.

My next Way of answering Arguments, is you say, to take no more Notice of your Arguments than if you had never wrote 'em (b). Now this, in my Opinion, is much the same with the first: for the leaving out what I cannot answer, might have taken in an entire Argument, and did not need to have been confin'd to a particular Word, or Circumstance in it; but this was the better Way to swell the Number of my Peculiarities. But what was it that I omitted? It was (I find) famous Demonstration, "that if the Primitive Christians had ever join'd in the Use of Prayers conceiv'd *Extempore*, between the Year CC. and the Vth Century, it was impossible, but we must have had some Information of it (c). And really, Sir, that it was omitted, was only because it was ridiculous. To make even your self sensible of this, I shall for a while consider it in relation to another Point. Nothing can be surer than that, during this Period of Time, they either did, or did not use *Pulpit-Prayers* before and after their Sermons. I wish now, Sir, you wou'd try the Force of your Argument either Way. Besides, have we any where an Account of all the Bishops and Clergy,

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(a) Letter, p. 146. (b) *Ibid.* p. 147. (c) Brief Hist. p. 277, 278, 279.

during that Period, throughout the Christian World? and of the Way in which every one of 'em did officiate in all Ordinances? Has *Austin*, *Socrates*, or *Sozomen* given you the particular Characters and Qualifications of such a Number of 'em; as Dr. *Calamy* has done of the *English Nonconformists*? And supposing they, any of 'em had been at that Time remarkably eminent for a *Gift of Prayer*, was there the same Reason, why it shou'd then have been expressly recorded by the Biographers of that Time; as the Doctor had to insert it into the Character of those, who not only liv'd when this Subject was warmly controverted, a *Liturgy* with unparallel'd Rigor and Severity impos'd, but these very Persons also were deep Sufferers on that account, &c. But not to descend further into the Particulars of the Passage you lay so much Stress upon: I tell you, Sir, it deserv'd no other Answer but a contemptuous Smile: for that the very Proposition, in Proof of which it is brought, is what every one that understands either *Logick*, or the *Mathematicks* knows, is in the Nature of the Thing impossible to be prov'd. But who so bold as they that are most blind?

The last Way of my answering Arguments, you say, is by giving you to understand, that you are to be answer'd as the Devil was (a). But upon a careful Review, you may perhaps be sensible; at least, I am satisfy'd, the intelligent and impartial Reader will, that it was not any Argument of yours; but a most uncharitable and groundless Slander, to which I return'd that as the Answer, [*the Lord rebuke thee*]. Nor was it capable of any other Answer. I appeal to all serious Readers, whether the Nature of the Accusation did not call for a most severe Reproof. For you to charge, as you do, the whole Body of the *Dissenters*, and expressly those among 'em who are very well dispos'd Persons, the most pious Part of the Congregations; that they never do properly pray at all, but only hear the Minister pray! I beseech you reflect seriously upon it. Can

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(a) Letter, p. 149.

you think it a light Thing, thus to offend against so great a Part of the Generation of God's Children? And this from a meer groundless Surmize. I tell you, Sir, all that dreadful Train of Accusation and harsh Language of mine (as you call it) of which you so feelingly complain (a); does not make such a Devil of you, as you here make of your self. Do you not here act the very Part of him, who is the Accuser of the Brethren; who is a Liar, and the Father of Lies; and who has been a Murderer from the Beginning? Really, Sir, nothing ever shock'd me so much, in all my Life, as this Paragraph of yours: and I must still make Use of the Words of the Arch-angel, *The Lord rebuke you*: 'till I can learn a fitter Answer to give to your railing Accusation.

SECT. IX. Your *Eighteenth* Chapter (being a Recapitulation of what you had said before) I pass, as what has already had a sufficient Answer. Only it may not be improper to observe, 1. That you here mention one Instance more, which I had said look'd like a Contradiction: and I still am of the same Opinion. That you, when you had mention'd it, take no further Notice of it; is what the Reader (perhaps) will expect the Reason of. For that it was omitted merely for *Brevity* Sake (b), is not easily to be believ'd: A Letter of 200 Pages, is not so very Brief an one, but that there might surely have been Room found or made in it, for one Paragraph upon this Head, tho' you had not allow'd a whole Chapter for it.

2. Whether it be you or I that can write the *falsest and unjustest things in the World*, &c. (c) is what I entirely leave with the impartial Reader. But when you pretend, that I use such Methods of answering as wou'd confute even the Bible it self (d), methinks you treat the Bible somewhat rudely, and do not shew all that great Veneration for it, which

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(a) Letter, p. 56. (b) *Ibid.* p. 153. (c) *Ibid.* p. 154. (d) *Ibid.*



you elsewhere boast of (a). What then, do you really believe, that I or any Person whatsoever, by any kind of Methods possible, can confute the Bible! No, Sir, if that had been possible, it wou'd, I'm persuaded, have long since been done. It has already born such Sort of Attacks, as wou'd have infallibly sunk any other Writings in the World. Do not therefore imagine the Reader will be affected with your vain Fear: He does not, I dare engage, discern any so near Affinity between the Bible and your sorry Scribbles: but that he can contentedly bear it, to see your *Brief History*, and *Discourse of Joint-Prayer* confuted; without Apprehensions of the least Danger to his Bible, from the very same Methods of answering, that I have any where us'd against you. But what Methods are they, that you are so much afraid of? You say, I have us'd gross Falsifications and Omissions; and that I have been convicted of 'em (b). Falsifications, gross Falsifications! what do you mean, Sir, I beseech you, where are they to be found? And meer Omissions, surely, will not necessarily make any Writer (whether inspir'd or not) guilty of Nonsense, Self-Contradictions, Forgery, Prevarication, Blunders, &c. If so, it wou'd not be so much as lawful, on any Occasion, to quote a single Word, or even a particular Text of Scripture; but we must always recite whole Chapters at least, if not entire Books at once, whenever we have Occasion to refer to any Passage in 'em. In short, I have long thought, and (for ought I know to the contrary) Mr. Bennet is the only Person in the World, that will not allow, Omissions to be not only tolerable, but even commendable, whatever Authors we are quoting from: provided those Omissions do not alter the Sense, nor any Way weaken the Force of what we are quoting from 'em. And if such Omissions are allowable, I am not afraid of the Reader's finding any other, in that Book of mine.

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(a) Letter, p. 182. (b) *Ibid.* p. 154.

3. You add, that I *seem to deliver my self after such a Manner, as if the Truth of what I assert were incontestably certain* (a). Now, Sir, if you mean, that I *always* express my self after such a Manner: or that I ever *once* do it, without sufficient Ground to support and answer my Expressions: I will submit to your Reproof, so soon as ever you prove your Charge. But if it shou'd upon Examination appear, that I *no where* us'd such Kind of Language, 'till I had carefully search'd into the Matter, and was well assur'd of the Truth of what I said; I hope it was not a Fault in me to express my self accordingly. And this I willingly refer to the careful Reader.

SECT. X. In your *Nineteenth* Chapter, you are displeas'd at my suppos'd Insinuation, as if your *Temper* was not the very best in the World: but where have I said this, Sir? I did in the Passage you refer to, leave Room for your *Education*, and other (unmention'd) *Causes*, to bear away the Blame (in great Part at least, if not altogether) from your *natural Temper*. Tho' I'll tell you plainly, I cannot but believe, there is somewhat very much amiss in the *Temper* and Make of those that are so *fond* of Controversies, as you have hitherto appear'd. They must be somewhat differing from the rest of the World about 'em, that can bear to live long in the Fire; much more those that can live upon it, as their Food and Sustainance.

2. I did not directly charge you, as *prepossess'd* by Interest; much less, *by meer Interest*, (as your Representation of the Matter wou'd insinuate:) but that the fairest Prospects of Advantage are on the Side of the Establish'd Church, is what no Man in his Wits can so much as question. How cou'd you therefore say, that if you are prepossess'd by Interest, 'tis on the *Dissenters Side* (b). Whether

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(a) Letter, p. 155. (b) *Ibid.* p. 161.

your present Preferments be less or more, pray Sir, was you ever better offer'd among the Dissenters? It will a little concern you Sir, to clear this Matter: or else, whether I call it so or not, the World will be ready to reckon this *Prevarication, Forgery, Falshood, &c.* in the very worst Sense of those Words.

3. As to what I said of the *Dissenters contributing as freely as their Neighbours, to those of the Conforming Clergy, who depend upon a precarious Maintenance*: it is what I my self know to be true, so far as my Acquaintance reaches, here in London: and I do not question, but (if you shou'd think it worth your while) you may easily be satisfy'd of it, by many of the *Lecturers* themselves here in Town.

4. Whereas you think it a sufficient Apology, for your having engag'd, *while so young*, in Church-Controversies; that *the Fault is since that Time considerably mended* (a). I must take the Freedom to tell you, what all your wisest Friends (I believe) do think as well as I; that to this Day you are, and are like to continue under the ill Effects of that unusual Hast; not only as it too far engag'd your Zeal and Honour in a Party-Cause, before you had Time to ripen and form your Judgment: but also as it too early took you off from more severe and useful Studies; and tinctur'd you with an Itch of Scribbling, which I fear hardly ever will be remedied.

When you afterwards talk of the *great Rebellion*: I hope, Sir, you do not mean by it the late glorious *Revolution*: and yet if this is not what you intend, 'tis very impertinently objected to me. Neither I, nor any Ancestors of mine ever were in the least concern'd (except as Sufferers) in the late *Civil Wars*. Yet after all, I cannot see, how they who then stood for the Defence of the Par-

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(a) Letter, p. 162.



liamentary Constitution and Government; against the arbitrary Encroachments of that unhappy Prince and his Ministers, can be justly branded as *Rebels*: while we who did the same Thing (with less Appearance of Authority) deservedly applaud and abide by what We have done, as a necessary *Self-Defence*.

Your Distinction between the *Church her self*, and those who are *in it*, and *great Men* in it (a); is what I do not very well understand. That it was chiefly out of *Respect* to several of the *Authors*, whose Sense you had collected, that your [*Abridgment*] escaped as it did; was what I had a great Deal of Reason to know: And since you advise or require me, for [very] *Shame, to talk no more of forbearing to answer out of Respect*; the World shall know, what I never design'd to tell: and I will contentedly bear all the Shame, that it shall bring upon me. Above ten Years ago, soon after your *Abridgment* came abroad, a Project was set on Foot to answer the [*London Cases*] by several Hands, according to the Order in which they stood in the *Abridgment*. The *Persons* were fix'd upon: and I have Reason to believe most (if not all) of their Parts actually prepar'd for the Press. I had for my own Share, to answer your *Eighth Chapter* concerning *Symbolizing with the Church of Rome*; and the *Tenth*, concerning *better Edification*. And (if I may be allow'd to know my own Resolutions, and the very Springs and Motives of 'em) I can and do solemnly assure the World, that that which I mention'd in my *Review*, was the true Reason why those particular Parts were never publish'd: and if any Persons in the World had been the Authors of those *Cases*, for whom I had not had the profound Respect, which I did and still do bear to those great and good Men, Dr. Patrick the late Bishop of *Ely*, and Dr. Fowler the present worthy Bishop of *Gloucester*; they shou'd long since have seen the Light. Nor can I think that I was the only Person, that suppress'd my Papers for this very Reason, and no other. And

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(a) Letter, p. 166.

now *what Shame* can it any Way bring upon me, tho' I shou'd still say, We sometimes do, and did particularly in the mention'd Case; *forbear to answer out of Respect*. And when you wou'd hereupon suppose, that it was *out of Respect* that We declin'd to answer the *Papists* in King *James's* Reign, &c. (a) and soon after demand the Reason of *Our Respect* to the Enemies of all Religion in general, and of the Reformation in particular (b). Your Reflection is not more *uncharitable*, than it is ridiculous and *absurd*. What, Sir, because We sometimes forbear answering out of *Respect*; therefore We never have, nor can have any *other Reasons* to forbear! And is this to be a Proof of your great Learning and Judgment? I hope, Sir, the *Art of Reasoning* is no Part of that Learning, which you pretend to confine within the Compass of your own Party; and cannot bear the poor Dissenting Teachers shou'd be allow'd any Share in. But after all, do you need to be told, that when the *Popish* Controversies were on Foot, the Press was shut against us: and that those *who then* had the Care of it (generally speaking) had so little Kindness for the Dissenters, that the *Popish* Pamphlets themselves wou'd have as easily obtain'd their License, had they needed it; as any Answers of ours could have done? I cou'd give you Instances, that wou'd sufficiently expose the Rigor of those Times: and fully shew, that if it was a Fault, that so few of *Our Answers* to the *Popish* Writers did appear in that Reign; it was the Fault of your Brethren, and not of ours. So that 'tis We, and not you, that have Reason to complain of our *hard Fate*: 'Tis hard indeed! first, to shut up the Press against Us, that We cou'd not write: and then reproach Us, because We did not do it.

You afterwards tell me, *you cannot but smile at my saying that Mr. Tong has effectually answer'd Mr. Norris's [Charge of Schism continued]* (c). But is then

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(a) Letter, p. 165. (b) *Ibid.* p. 166. (c) *Ibid.* p. 168.

what I said so very ridiculous! Pray Sir, please to tell us wherein it is so.

And 1. You say, "Alas! that excellent Treatise is not to be answer'd in a few Pages. *Alas, and well a day!* what will become of us then? for 'tis very plain, Mr. Tong has bestow'd but a few Pages upon it: If I cou'd but learn of Mr. Bennet, just how many Pages were still wanting, to compleat the Answer; I wou'd use what Interest I have with Mr. Tong, to persuade him to write a few Pages more. However, Sir, I am to thank you for the Hint you have already given me: for I never understood before, that we are to judge of the Answer to an Author, whether it be an effectual one or not, by the Number of its Pages.

But 2. You further add, "Besides, Mr. Norris was so far from knowing that his Book was answer'd, that (as I remember) he had never heard that Mr. Tong had touch'd upon him, 'till I my self told him of it many Years after Mr. Tong's Piece was publish'd. Now this is a pleasant Story truly! Mr. Norris did not know his Book was answer'd: therefore to be sure what Mr. Tong had said could not possibly be an Answer to him.

And 3. You then call the whole of what Mr. Tong had said, *insignificant Exceptions*. Which is indeed a short and easie Way of dealing with the Dissenters: but 'tis neither very reputable, nor likely to be effectual. And now, Sir, I hope I may be allow'd, in my Turn to smile. The whole of this Paragraph cannot fail to have provok'd the Reader's Laughter: and why may not I also laugh for Company. *Insignificant Exceptions!* Yes, Sir, so you say: but will your Friend Mr. Norris say so too? I can hardly believe, that those *Exceptions* which have stopp'd his Mouth for almost Seventeen Years past, are what he does or can look upon as *insignificant*. How far this may provoke that Gentleman,



tleman, I know not. nor do I say this in Contempt of him, or his Abilities; which I do allow to be very considerable: vastly beyond your own Size, Sir. But yet, I am so well satisfy'd in the Truth and Strength of Mr. Tong's Argument against him, that I am under no Apprehensions for my Friend, that he will at all need a *Second* in that Controversie. However if you shou'd ever pretend to engage in that Quarrel, and offer to defend Mr. Norris's Charge, against these which you call *insignificant Exceptions*: I know not but I may venture again to undertake you: and give my ingenious Friend the Opportunity to reserve himself for some more considerable Undertaking.

SECT. XI. You do in the next Chapter take Notice of some *other Charges*, I had advanc'd against you. Particularly *First*, you seem very uneasy under the Charge of *Assurance, Confidence, Vanity, &c.* But I willingly refer it to the Reader, whether ever I have any where us'd such Language, without having (at that very Time) Instances before me, that were sufficient to invite and justify the Censure. And whereas you refer me to some Passages of mine, wherein I express my self like one that was *fully persuaded* of the Truth of what I wrote: and thereupon challenge me, to pick any one Passage out of your Books, if I can, wherein you speak with greater Assurance, Confidence, &c. (a) And seem to reckon, if my Passages be consistent with true Modesty, that you are then certainly as modest as any one cou'd wish (b). You mean, I suppose, that 'tis all one to speak with Assurance, whether it be with or without any Grounds in the World: whereas I always thought there was a very wide Difference in the Case. And that the Charge of Assurance, Confidence, Vanity, Assuming, &c. was never intended as a Reflection upon the full Satisfaction of Mind with which any one speaks; so much as upon the Groundlessness of that Satisfaction. And

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(a) Letter, p. 177. (b) *Ibid.* p. 178.

if this may be allow'd, I am not afraid to leave it with the Reader, to judge whether these Characters do best suit you or me.

But *one Instance* you mention, which *you believe* has as great a Measure of the most unchristian Confidence, &c. coub'd in it, as ever any one Writer was Master of (a). By the Way, Sir, pray what do you here, as well as oft in other Parts of your Letter, make of me! I hope you will no more complain of the *Harshness* and *Severity* of my Language. But what is this most impudent and wicked Passage of mine? Why, I said, *If this Gentleman, or others of his Make, will still go on to press and plead for THE IMPOSITION of a Liturgy, &c. they will only thereby make it extremely plain, that they do distrust the Goodness of their Cause, &c.* Upon this you cry out, "What a Pack of Villains must those Persons be, that will write for a Cause they distrust the Goodness of; that will contend, such a Liturgy is preferable in its own Nature to any other Way, &c. that will argue for it, from Practices and Examples in Scripture, &c. I say, what impudent, profligate, Antichristian Miscreants must those be, that will dare to act thus (b)? But, Sir, you shou'd have observ'd, that I did not say, if they press and plead for a Liturgy, or for a National Liturgy; if they plead for that Way as lawful, or even as most expedient: but if they press and plead for the Imposition of it, that is, to have this Way of Worship forc'd, either upon Ministers or People, by the Sword of the Magistrate. And can any thing be plainer, than that those do distrust the Goodness of their Cause, who call in the Help of such unmanly as well as unchristian Methods to support it. When you afterwards desire me to understand, that what I have written against the Imposition of a National Liturgy, is arrantly trifling (c). Sir, I know not but I might comply with your Desire; if my Understanding was absolutely in my own Power: But my Understanding

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(a) Letter, (b) *Ibid.* p. 180. (c) *Ibid.* p. 180, 181.

is what I never yet cou'd subdue, either to my own Interest, or to other Peoples Humours: How ductile and complaisant *your own* may be, God and your self do best know. And when you add, *that you will effectually prove it such, i. e.* prove what I had wrote against the *Imposition* of a National Liturgy, to be *arrantly* trifling: I beg it of you, as the greatest Kindness you can possibly do me, that you wou'd be sure to keep your Word.

Secondly, You next complain, that I charg'd you with *Uncharitableness*: and whether it was not with the justest Reason in the World, let the Reader judge, from those very Passages of yours, to which that Charge of mine does any where refer. When you plead, "that if what you have said be true, it was the *greatest Charity*, you cou'd do us, to endeavour our *Conviction* (a). You seem to think, that the *meer Truth or Falshood of the Principles* you maintain, is to be the Standard, according to which your Censures are to be judg'd either *charitable* or *uncharitable*. Now here again, We have a *Specimen* of your great Judgment. Is there no Difference then between *Truths* that are plain, and universally agreed among serious Christians; and those that in the Apostle's Phrase, are yet Matter of *doubtful Disputation*: between *Truths* that are of the utmost Weight and Importance, such as the Safety of Human Society, or even the Salvation of Souls is directly concern'd in; and those that are comparatively *little* Things, and what God has therefore no where expressly determin'd, much less laid any Stress upon. Shew us where God has declar'd, that he will not accept the Prayers of any, but such as make Use of *precompos'd Forms*; nor allow that they pray at all, unless they pray in that Way: Shew us where he has declar'd, that he will not accept or bless the Ministrations of any, but those who are *Episcopally ordain'd*; and that He will look upon all others as *Usurpers* of the Ministerial function: and I will then readily own, that I have

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(a) Letter, p. 181.



been too hasty and severe, in charging you with *Uncharitableness*, on these Accounts. But are either of the Instances you produce from me, like these of yours? may we not, without being *uncharitable* our selves, freely censure the *tyrannizing* and *uncharitable* Spirit of the High-Church! and represent to our Superiors, the horrid Profanations of the *Lord's-Supper*, that are occasion'd by the *Sacramental Test*! Can you deny the *Facts* I there laid down, or dare you undertake the *Defence* of 'em? What mean you then to quarrel with me upon this Head? Do you imagine, Sir, that the suppos'd Interest of a *Party*, that call themselves the *Church*; ought to be prefer'd to the common Interest of Christianity, and the Honour of our great Redeemer? If this be your Sense of the Matter, *the Lord pity you, and those that follow such a Guide*. Your Attempts to exasperate the Government against me, upon this Occasion, I heartily forgive: tho' I thank God, I cou'd as cheerfully die at a Stake, in this Cause; as in that, for which the blessed Martyrs suffer'd, in the *Marian Days*.

*Thirdly*, The Charge of ill Language, was ground-ed upon particular Instances, recited at large in my *Review*, p. 412, 413. Surely Mr. Bennet himself cannot think it to be any other. When you challenge me, to *disprove it if I can* (a): You are not in earnest, sure. A *Fresh-man* might have been ashamed to write at this Rate. Does Mr. Bennet need to be told, that 'till he has prov'd the *hard Things* he charges here upon our Way of Praying; We have no more to do, than only to deny 'em.

As to that *rash young Brother* of yours, Mr. R—sey, if you want to be acquainted with him, you may enquire for one somewhere about *Fen-Church-street*, that while the late *Incendiary* stood impeach'd by all the Commons of *Great Britain*, had the Impudence to baptize a Child by the Name of *Sach—el*: and since he was found guilty of *high Crimes* and

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(a) Letter, p. 186,

*Misdemeanours*, in the most awful Court on Earth, has not only presum'd to drink the *Criminal's* Health; but in his *Grace after Meat*, has scandalously join'd *his Name*, with that of the *Church* and *Queen*. If you now know him, Sir, you may do well to advise him, no more to put forward the *Pretender's* Health in mix'd Company: tho' when he is among Friends, it may go round the more pleasantly, for the Sake of that ingenious Rhime,

*Here's an Health to the Person whom no Man dare name;  
And he's a false Brother that refuses the same.*

This, I suppose, is a Key to the *Doctor's* late infamous *Sermon*; the better to let the *Faction* into the Meaning of it: and at the same time a Test of the *Sincerity*, with which the Clergy of *High-Church* have swallow'd the Oaths of *Allegiance*, and *Abjuration*. These Accounts as well as the former, are ready to be attested by Persons of unquestionable Reputation, whenever there may be Occasion for it.

What you immediately add, in Behalf of *unwritten Traditions* (a). I profess, I know not, what to make of. The Notice I had formerly taken of that Distinction, between Traditions of *Doctrines*, and of *Practices* (b); shou'd surely have oblig'd you to do somewhat more, than just barely mention it. But pray, Sir, do you mean then, that tho' the *Doctrines* of Christianity are contain'd in the Scriptures; yet for the *Practices* of Religion, we are to depend upon unwritten Tradition. For my Part, I have long since resolv'd to make the holy Scriptures the Rule both of my *Faith* and *Practice*: And the rather, because I find the great Apostle delivering what relates to the Institution of the *Lord's-Supper*, which was to be one of the *Practices* of the Church; in the same Way, that he did the most important *Doctrines* of the Christian Faith, 1 Cor. XI. 23, 24; &c. compar'd with 1 Cor. XV. 3, 4. You tell me, *if I cannot reconcile such Passages to the common Do-*

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(a) Letter, p. 188. (b) Review, p. 106, 107.

*Drine of Protestants, I may thank God that others can do it for me: What! will it then consist with the common Doctrine of Protestants, to equal unwritten Traditions with the Scriptures themselves, &c? As I do not need, so I never expect to see that done: but I thank God, that I have a Bible: and with that alone, I do not much question, but I shou'd be able to defend the Protestant Religion; as well as Mr. Bennet can ever do, with the Help of any other Traditions (written or unwritten) that the ancient Fathers can furnish you with. Nor do I apprehend the Reformation to be in the least wounded, or in Danger, by exposing those (whether Ancients, or Moderns) who wou'd equal unwritten Traditions, with the Oracles of God himself.*

*Fourthly, You are offended with me, because I took Notice of the Jest (a) you made upon a Subject, which rather call'd for the utmost Awe and Reverence. But may then the Presence of the Holy Spirit with Believers, and his gracious Influences, be innocently turn'd into a Jest? and do such Sort of Freedoms become your Character, either as a Christian or a Clergyman? No, Sir, inward and real Religion has other Enemies enough, that are too ready to laugh it out of Countenance: You do not need to put to your helping Hand. And what is it but a Jest, to apply a Scripture-Phrase (whether it be to one or other) in a Way of Banter and Ridicule? I pray God forgive, and heal the Levity of your Spirit.*

*Fifthly, You next complain, as if I had done you some mighty Wrong, when to expose the more sensibly your ridiculous Scheme [that every one must necessarily be beforehand well acquainted with the Prayers that are to be us'd in Publick; otherwise they cannot possibly join in 'em:] To expose this, I say, as it deserv'd, I intimated, that your Advice to the Government, to print the Forms for*

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(a) Letter, p. 190.



*Fasts and Thanksgiving-Days*, so as that every one might have 'em to peruse before-hand: must surely mean, that you wou'd have 'em *number the People*. Nor do I yet see, how it will otherwise be so much as possible, according to your Notion, for the People to pray upon these Occasions. So that the *Inference* is therefore only an execrable one (a); because it naturally flows from a Principle of yours, that is really 'so.

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Sixthly, When you apprehend that I threatned to *disprove the Validity of Episcopal Ordination* (b) in general; it was a meer Mistake. For what I said of that Nature, I intended *singly of your self*. Which I thought you easily would have understood: because I had said immediately before, that I fear'd there might be some [*Conformists*, as well as others] that were *Usurpers of the Ministerial Function*. I never thought that all were so. And if what I there say, must be understood to reflect upon *Episcopal Orders* as such; any one may see, that I equally reproach our own *Presbyterian* ones too: which no one can imagine, I ever design'd. So that all you say upon this Occasion, is (to borrow your own Expression) a *ridiculous empty Rant*, which I therefore pass, as it deserves, with Contempt.

Lastly, Whereas you put it to me, to say, *whether you have treated Mr. Clarkson and Mr. Bold, as I have treated you: and challenge me to name but one single Instance of an harsh Reflection, &c.* (c). I must beg the Reader's Pardon, while I lay before you a few of your own Expressions, tho' I am not at Leisure to gather up a compleat Catalogue of 'em. As for Mr. Bold (tho' he be not a *Dissenting Teacher*; but *Episcopally* ordain'd, and one of your Brethren, Sir: yet) you tell us, in a Way of Ridicule, He very gravely interposes, *Brief Hist.* p. 248. that his *Pre- tence is groundless and false*, p. 116. that he is most

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(a) Letter, p. 191. (b) *Ibid.* p. 195. (c) *Ibid.* p. 194.

grossly mistaken, p. 124. that his *Objection* is utterly impertinent, and that he does in Reality make St. Basil a Lyar, p. 134. You charge him with that small Fault commonly call'd a Self-Contradiction, p. 186. Nay, with arrant Nonsense, and with such Stuff as no Man in his Wits cou'd write, p. 187. Again, say you, what a fair and plausible Story has our Author told? and yet every Syllable of it is false, p. 122. And you add, that you are really asham'd to find in him so many notorious Proofs of his hasty Writing, or something that deserves a much worse Name, p. 137.

And neither Mr. Clarkson's Age, Gravity, Learning, Judgment, nor his great Moderation, and his establish'd Reputation and Character among all wise and good Men, whether in or out of the Establish'd Church, cou'd prevail with you to spare his *Ashes* when dead: but you most unmercifully insult him, on the Occasion of a few Slips (whether real, or only suppos'd ones, is not material) in a posthumous and unfinished Piece; that not he but the Publisher only, ought to be accountable for. You tell us in a Way of Ridicule, that he puts a shrew'd Question, p. 180. and call the Reasons he offers wise Reasons, p. 220. and p. 305. You call what is contain'd in that Book of his in the gross, thin and frivolous Pretences, p. 210. His Arguments are all weak and frivolous, p. 315. His Exceptions trifling, and against plain Evidence, p. 182. What he discourses is weak and impertinent, p. 211. and can prove nothing but the Weakness of Mr. Clarkson's Judgment, p. 213. His Quotation is impertinent, p. 261. And upon Supposition that his Account was really faithful, yet it is a most impertinent Plea, p. 332. Nay, you rise still higher, and charge him not only with Assurance, Confidence, Vanity, but with rash Zeal, and egregious Prevarication. Read again your own Words. Here (say you) is Assurance and Error in Plenty, p. 182. Mr. Clarkson has Confidence enough &c. p. 337. To convince Mr. Clarkson's Friends of the Vanity of this Pretence, &c. p. 304. I fear Mr. Clarkson's Zeal would not suffer him to take much

Pains in considering his Arguments, or to enquire whether they might not be retorted with great Advantage, p. 269. But your Reflections upon his Sincerity, are yet more severe. Mr. Clarkson's Plea (say you) is not only impertinent, but axiomatically false: and wou'd easily have appear'd such to the Reader, had he not most unfaithfully omitted the Context, p. 333. Mr. Clarkson names no Place, tho' he is forward enough to produce his Vouchers when he has any; and I know him so well, that I dare not trust him upon his bare Word, &c. p. 266. Mr. Clarkson thought it advisable to take no Notice of this:— And therefore breaks off the Quotation abruptly, and gives only so much of the Text as might serve to blind the Reader, and very honestly leaves out the rest, p. 264. Once more, say you, Let any Man peruse the whole Passage, and then judge, whether 'twas possible for one that design'd to represent him honestly, to give such an Account of St. Austin's Opinion, p. 57.

I forbear to mention the base and scurrilous Language, with which you treat me in this Letter of Yours: because you may pretend I had provok'd you to it. But what Excuse can you possibly make, for what I have now set before the Reader! And yet do you complain that you are reflected on? or have you any Right to more gentle Usage? In short, Sir, your sawcy Treatment not only of particular Persons, but of the whole Body of the Dissenting Ministers has again provok'd me, against my Temper and Inclination, to be severe upon you: and if this Kind of Language is what you cannot bear; pray, for the future, learn to forbear it. For while you use your Betters at this Rate, you must not imagine that others will treat you with any great Respect.

SECT. XII. And now Sir, pray think again what it is that you have been doing (a). You seem to make your Boasts as if you had done something very wonderfull; But what is it, I beseech you; and where is it to be

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(a.) Letter, p. 90.



found? You have not, so far as I can see, clear'd the Sense of any one Term, that I complain'd you had left obscure: You take not the least Notice of any Attempt I had made, to fix with you the State of the main Question in Debate: And tho' you have with great Freedom, censur'd my *Animadversions upon the Titles of your Books*, in the Gross, because of the Pleasantry that is mix'd with 'em; yet you perfectly overlook the whole of the Argument that is contain'd in 'em; tho' in the Compass of those few Pages, the sensible Reader may find a just Answer to both your Books. You do not so much as offer to prove that the ancient *Jews*, our Saviour, or his *Apostles* did ever, so much as once, make Use of such precompos'd set Forms, as are in Dispute between you and us: Much less, that they always us'd them and no other. You have not yet prov'd this, of any one among 'em; much less of all and every one of them. And as to the *Primitive Christians*, you have not yet prov'd, that any one single Church, in any Nation under Heaven, did in the five first Centuries, constantly make Use of precompos'd Forms, upon all Occasions; much less have you made it appear, of every particular Church throughout all Nations, during that entire Period: Which therefore still lies upon you to do.

Again, you have no where yet so much as attempted a Reply to the Difficulties I laid before You; (a) which must be clear'd before it can be allow'd, that the Forms they us'd were such as the respective Congregations were accusom'd to, and thoroughly acquainted with.

Nor have you offer'd one Word or Syllable in Defence of the Imposition of a Liturgy: Tho' this you do indeed promise you will do, if God spare Life and Health. I must therefore beg, whenever you undertake it, that you will distinctly inform the World, who they are with whom this Power is lodg'd; who that can Authoritatively impose a National Liturgy: That we may know whether this Authority is ve-

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(a.) Review, p. 11, 12, 13. and again, p. 46, 47, 48.  
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sted in the *States of the Kingdom* agreeing in Parliament: or whether in the *Clergy*, in, or out of *Convocation*. If you fix it in *the latter*, and make it a Branch of *the Church's Power*, you will do well to shew, *when and by whom* this Power was committed to 'em: That we may be satisfy'd, they came honestly by it; and that they have from the Beginning been in Possession of it. And once more, we surely ought to know, *how far* this their imposing Power does *extend and reach*: Whether *all* are immediately oblig'd, to use *whatever* they shall appoint to be the *National Liturgy*: or, whether after they or the Majority of them are agreed, every Minister is not still at Liberty (unless we should rather say, he is oblig'd) to judge the matter over again for himself: And at last, whether upon due Deliberation, every one ought not either to use, or to forbear the the Use of such a Liturgy, according as he apprehends the great Ends of his Ministry are most likely to be reach'd, one Way or the other.

Again, you never once in all your Letter, offer the least Tittle to support your heavy Charge against *extempore Prayer*: You say of it in the Gross, (without distinguishing between one Man's Performances, and another) that this Way of praying *defiles the Assemblies of Christians, and drives away the Holy Spirit from them*: That it *hinders Devotion, and consequently displeases God*: That it *is really intollerable, odious to God, and to be abhorr'd by Man*: With a great deal more to the same Purpose. But when I complain'd of it, and expected you should either prove or retract the Charge: All I can yet get in Answer from you is, "that those Passages are what you still own and maintain: That you know, they are very close, and very true; and that therefore I cannot bear 'em, &c. (a.) And do you seriously intend this for an Answer? I beg, Sir, if you will *own and maintain* this terrible Charge against us, that you will be prevail'd upon to produce your Evidence: And do not think the World will give

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(a.) Letter, p. 186.

in to it, much less that we ourselves shall be convinc'd of it, merely because you tell us, that you know 'tis very true.

Nor do you here attempt to produce any Principles of ours, upon which we are oblig'd (as you said we were) to abhor the Prayers offer'd in our own Assemblies: that is you mean, every Prayer that is not a precompos'd set Form. In a Word, you have not so much as once attempted either to support the most material Passages in your own Books: Or directly to reply to any thing in mine, that I lay any Strefs upon. And yet you make your Boasts of what you have been doing. Really, Sir, I cou'd almost fancy, you are your self by this Time made sensible that you have been egregiously trifling. Had you had never so plainly the Advantage of me, in the several Particulars that make up your Letter, it would not at all have affected the main Cause between us, nor any important Branch of it. Admit that I had mistaken and misrepresented your Definition of Prayer, as you say I did: That you did not contradict you self where I thought you had: That I had without sufficient Reason charg'd you with Forgery, Prevarication, &c. That you had not blunder'd when I said you did: Admit, that that Passage of mine touching the Author of the Tract de Spiritu Sancto, had upon Examination fail'd: That you had plainly prov'd, my Skill in Ecclesiastical Antiquity to have been but small, not exceeding even Mr. Baxter's or Mr. Clarkson's Measure; and less than that, even you your self do not seem to wish any one should think it is: Nay admit, that I had been so weak and foolish, as (in the Instances you refer to) to have answer'd your Arguments in the Ways you represent as mine; what would you have the Reader infer? Would it follow, think you, that therefore precompos'd set Forms are always preferable, to that call'd Extempore-Prayer, in publick Worship! That they are not only preferable, but the only Prayers that may lawfully be us'd in Publick! That a Liturgy consisting of such Forms, may and ought to be (invariably and with utmost Rigor) impos'd in every



every Nation, both upon the Clergy and People! Or, even that the ancient *Jews*, our *Savior*, his *Apostles*, and the primitive *Christians* never join'd in any Prayers but such Forms only! Yet these are the principal Points in Debate between you and me.

But, after all, the Reader will conclude, that I have either been so happy as to avoid the giving you any Advantage, even in these little Things, where the more cautious Writers themselves, are not always upon their Guard: Or else, that Mr. *Bennet* is a very unhappy Man in the Choice of his Instances.

And now therefore (to conclude) I do agree with you, that *this Part of the Controversie is already driven so far, as will probably make one of us heartily sick and ashamed of it (a).* The Reader will, as 'tis fit he should, judge for himself, which of us has the greater Reason to be so: Tho' if you please, the Matter may still be thus accommodated between us: I am heartily sick, and you ought to be ashamed of it. If this Freedom be offensive to you, I can assure you, 'tis what I do not chuse; But what by your Way of writing I am forc'd upon: And what you therefore may escape for the future, provided you will henceforward keep close to the Arguments before us; and avoid, on your Part, those Personal Censures and Reproaches, which you can so ill bear to have return'd.

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(a.) Letter, p. 198.

I am with great Sincerity,

London.  
May, 20. 1710.

Sir,

Your faithfull Friend,

And Servant,

B. ROBINSON.



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## ADVERTISEMENT.

**W**HEREAS I have lately met with a *Letter*, directed to my Self, under the Title of *Lay Craft exemplified, &c.* And since that, with a *Treatise*, entitul'd, *A Vindication of the Church of England from the Aspersions of a Libel intituled, Priestcraft in Perfection, &c.* I had fully intended to follow this to Mr. Bennet, with an Answer to them, so far at least as I am concern'd with them. But being inform'd, that another Gentleman of some Rank and Figure in the Church, is also collecting Materials, with a Design to write upon the same Subject: I am willing to wait a while 'till that appears. And then I shall not fail, with the first Opportunity, to give the World my further Thoughts upon the great Point, [*of the Authority of the Church*]: And to take what Notice may be proper of the above-mention'd Writings.

Price ~~three~~ <sup>3</sup> Pence.

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# ADVERTISEMENT

HEREAS I have lately met with a Letter directed to my self, under the Title of "My last evening, &c." and since that time, a friend, entitled, "A Declaration of the Church of England, from the Affair of a Libel intended against a Person, &c." I had fully intended to follow this to Mr. Parnell, with an Answer to him, in as far as I am concerned with them. But being informed that another Gentleman of some Rank and Name in the Church, is also collecting Materials with a Design to write upon the same Subject: I am willing to wait a while till that appears. And when I shall see fit, with the said Opportunity, to give the World my further Thoughts upon the great Point, [of the Authority of the Church]: And to take what Notice may be proper of the above-mentioned Writings.



